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ABSTRACT

Civic education plays an essential role in strengthening the democratic society, preparing informed citizens, and promoting their participation in the civic life of their communities. This project explores state K-12 civic education policies and related requirements nationwide, as well as factors that shape K-12 civic education policies and practices in school districts and schools. The first two chapters of this report provide the national and state contexts for content standards in core subject areas, including civics; review state constitutional provisions and statutes that promote civic education; and examine how social studies standards, assessment, teacher certification, and other state policies build on these provisions and statutes. Recognizing the centrality of state standards, chapters 3 through 5 examine the extent to which the civics content in state standards promotes civic dispositions, civic intellectual skills, and civic knowledge, respectively. Chapters 6 through 11 examine several influences on civic education at the district level: standards; instructional materials; assessment; professional development; extracurricular and co-curricular activities; and individuals, organizations, and funding. Chapter 12 provides recommendations for developing sustainable state and school district civics commitments that ensure systematic attention to civic education in grades K-12. Key findings from the project report are included, as are extensive chapter notes, and 47 tables of data. Seven appendices contain additional information. (BT)

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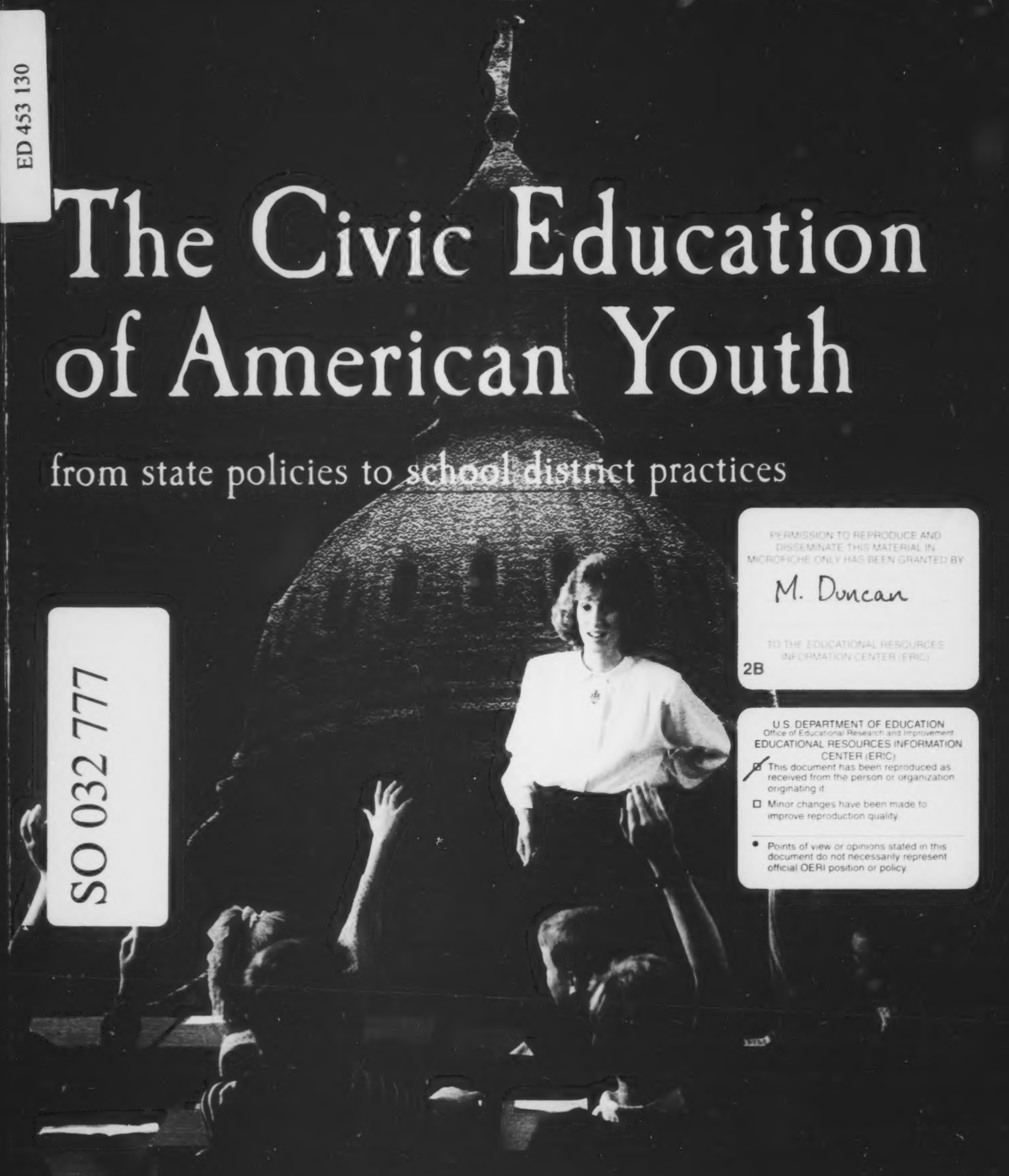
from state policies to school district practices



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Policy Research Project Report

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Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
Policy Research Project Report
Number 133

The Civic Education of American Youth: From State Policies to School District Practices

Project directed by
Kenneth W. Tolo

A report by the
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Policy Research Project Participants

Students

Benjamin C. Crawford, B.A. (History), Dartmouth College

Karen Eikner, B.A. (Latin American Studies), The University of Texas at Austin

Beth Ann Franklin, B.A. (History, Policy), Carnegie Mellon University

Jeffrey J. Goveia, B.S. (Mechanical Engineering), Oklahoma State University

Shannon E. Lamm, B.A. (Philosophy, Humanities), Trinity University; M.A. (Teaching), Trinity University

Greg Litt, B.A. (Sociology, Judaic Studies), Brandeis University

Megan A. Magrane, B.A. (Politics), Mount Holyoke College

Michelle S. Patterson, B.A. (Political Science, Journalism), University of Oklahoma

Gregory R. Pulliam, B.S. (Public Policy, Planning and Policy), University of Oregon

Nicoletta Raggi, Laurea (Political Science), University of Genoa, Italy

Tiffany M. Reyes, B.S. (Foreign Service), Georgetown University

Peter A. Weber, B.A. (History, English), University of Iowa

Anthony Wier, B.A. (Political Science, Russian), Trinity University

Dana R. Williams, B.A. (Political Science), Texas A & M University

Elizabeth Ann Witt, B.A. (English), Agnes Scott College; M.A. (English), University of Rochester; Ph.D. (English), University of Rochester

Project Director

Kenneth W. Tolo, Ph.D., Professor of Public Affairs, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin

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Foreword

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs has established interdisciplinary research on policy problems as the core of its educational program. A major part of this program is the nine-month policy research project, in the course of which one or more faculty members from different disciplines direct the research of ten to thirty graduate students of diverse backgrounds on a policy issue of concern to a government or nonprofit agency. This "client orientation" brings the students face to face with administrators, legislators, and other officials active in the policy process and demonstrates that research in a policy environment demands special talents. It also illuminates the occasional difficulties of relating research findings to the world of political realities.

This assessment of state K-12 civic education policies and related requirements that exist nationwide and the factors that shape K-12 civic education policies and practices in school districts and schools stems from a policy research project commissioned by the Center for Civic Education in 1998-99. Recommendations highlight ways in which states, school districts, community organizations, and educators can improve the education students receive in the civic knowledge, skills, and virtue necessary to fulfill their roles as citizens.

The curriculum of the LBJ School is intended not only to develop effective public servants but also to produce research that will enlighten and inform those already engaged in the policy process. The project that resulted in this report has helped to accomplish the first task; it is our hope that the report itself will contribute to the second.

Finally, it should be noted that neither the LBJ School nor The University of Texas at Austin necessarily endorses the views or findings of this report.

Edwin Dorn
Dean

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Special thanks are also due Suzie Phipps and Anthony Wier for their assistance and persistence in preparing the manuscript of this report for publication.

Executive Summary

Civic education plays an essential role in strengthening our democratic society, preparing informed citizens and promoting their participation in the civic life of their communities. Although this responsibility is borne by all members of a civil society, a special responsibility is placed on schools and educators. Students from kindergarten through grade 12 need to be provided with the necessary learning experiences to enable them to become informed and actively participating citizens.

Lack of civic engagement and civic literacy among American youth is widespread, however. Students often do not have the civic knowledge, the higher-order civic intellectual skills, and the civic dispositions necessary to connect civics facts and concepts to the responsibilities of citizenship. Although many state policymakers and educators give lip service to the importance of civic education in the schools, in reality state policies and school practices often fail to provide students with the civic education they deserve.

This project explores state K-12 civic education policies and related requirements nationwide, as well as factors that shape K-12 civic education policies and practices in school districts and schools. The first two chapters of this report provide the national and state contexts for content standards in core subject areas, including civics; review state constitutional provisions and statutes that promote civic education; and examine how social studies standards, assessment, teacher certification, and other state policies build on these provisions and statutes. Recognizing the centrality of state standards, chapters 3 through 5 examine the extent to which the civics content in state standards promotes civic dispositions, civic intellectual skills, and civic knowledge, respectively. Chapters 6 through 11 examine several influences on civic education at the district level: standards; instructional materials; assessment; professional development; extracurricular and co-curricular activities; and individuals, organizations, and funding. Chapter 12 provides recommendations for developing sound, sustainable state and school district civics commitments that ensure systematic attention to civic education in grades K-12. Key findings from the project report follow.

State Civic Education Policies and Requirements

Over one-fourth of all state constitutions state that a system of public instruction is required because an informed and capable citizenry is vital to the preservation of a free and democratic government. More than one-half of all states have statutes explicitly addressing civic education. While all but one state has implemented K-12 content standards in at least one subject area, only three states have created separate state standards devoted solely to civic education. Another 23 states have an explicit section covering civics topics within their social studies standards, while 18 states have civics topics interspersed throughout their social studies standards. Students must take a government or civics course in high school in 29 states.

At the same time, civics topics are tested statewide in 31 states, but in only three of these states are tests dedicated to civics topics alone. Another ten states and the District of Columbia expect to begin testing in the near future, while nine states have no plans to assess students in civic education. A large majority of states make little distinction between teachers of history, economics, and civics with respect to teacher certification, and only 21 states report that teachers of civics are required to complete additional in-service training during their careers in order to maintain their certification to teach.

Promoting Civic Education in State Standards

States are increasingly using content standards as their most explicit statement of what should be taught in the classroom. Most states' standards include some civics topics, but the standards rarely give all components of civic education the attention they deserve.

Promoting Civic Dispositions in State Standards

Many states' social studies standards encourage a school environment that makes the development of students' civic dispositions more likely. Researchers elected to assess how state standards promote civic dispositions by examining how explicitly standards' introductory statements of purpose highlight the importance of civic education and how clearly state standards are organized to present civics topics to educators, parents, and students. Of the 43 states with social studies standards, 32 highlight the importance of civic education in the standards' introductory statements of purpose. However, many states (12) use organizational formats for their standards that makes civics content relatively hard to find and use.

Promoting Civic Intellectual Skills in State Standards

Ensuring that state standards promote the use and application of higher-order thinking skills is closely related to ensuring that standards promote students' informed and effective civic participation. However, on average, the civics content in states' social studies standards overemphasizes the lower-order thinking skills of identifying and describing positions relative to the more challenging skills of explaining and analyzing a position. Civics statements requiring students to evaluate, take, and defend positions—the highest-order level of thinking—are the least prevalent in most state standards.

Promoting Civic Knowledge in State Standards

Civic knowledge is the content dimension of civic education. Without civic knowledge, there is no foundation for applying civic intellectual skills or civic dispositions. Researchers comprehensively analyzed standards in seven states (California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, and Texas) to evaluate the thoroughness with which civics content is covered in a state's social studies standards (relative to the five organizing questions and their subtopics in the *National Standards for Civics and Government*); the relative attention given to various civics topics (again using the national standards framework); and the specificity of the civics topics covered. The civics statements in the seven states' social studies standards exhibit varying degrees of thoroughness, attention to civics content, and specificity.

Influences on Civic Education at the District Level

In addition to describing state policies, this report examines how such policies influence civic education at the district level in seven states (California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, and Texas). Project researchers met with state, district, and school administrators; teachers; students; university faculty in teacher education programs; and other community leaders. In addition, researchers surveyed secondary social studies teachers and district social studies coordinators in 14 districts in these states.

Influences of State Standards

Most districts consider state social studies standards when creating their curricula, and many offer courses with civics content. Nevertheless, a large number of secondary social studies teachers are somewhat or completely unfamiliar with their states' standards; only one-fourth of the responding teachers reported being extremely familiar with these standards. Teachers also are unaware or confused about district and school civic education policies. In every district examined, civic disposition is given attention less often and less strongly in courses with civics content than are civic participation, knowledge, and skills. This is in part a reflection of the inadequacies of the civics content in state standards noted above, but it also reflects the state policies that accompany standards.

Influences of Instructional Materials

While many factors influence civics instruction, instructional materials play a key role in shaping students' civic knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and dispositions. Even though states and districts have varying degrees of freedom in their textbook adoption policies, selection of textbooks with civics content is surprisingly uniform across the districts visited. Nevertheless, many teachers are turning to supplemental materials (especially those published by the Center for Civic Education) and, increasingly, the Internet and the World Wide Web to kindle civics interest in students.

Influences of Assessment

State-level assessment policies are one of the most influential factors affecting civic education at the district level. Most states that currently assess civics topics do so within a more general test of social studies or other topics. In states that already have statewide assessments in subjects other than civics, these assessments clearly drive resource allocation. What is assessed receives the time, attention, and funding; consequently, testing other subjects but not testing civics ensures that civics content will be marginalized and virtually ignored by many school administrators and teachers.

Influences of Professional Development

Policies affecting the pre-service certification of teachers and their continuing professional development often diminish the quality of civics instruction. Prospective teachers and professors of education alike generally recognize civics as an important component of K-12 education, but state certification requirements that do not explicitly highlight civic education lower the priority given to teacher education and certification in civics. In-service and other professional development opportunities provide teachers with information about incorporating technology into their civics instruction, improving their coverage of all civic education components, and implementing new state statutes or district policies and practices relating to civic education.

Influences of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities

Extracurricular and co-curricular activities play a critical role in civic education. Interactive, participatory programs, whether or not they are tied formally to the classroom curriculum, provide a necessary complement to classroom curricular efforts to enhance students' understanding of citizenship by linking their civic knowledge to practical experience. Community service and service learning activities provide students with a strong sense of accomplishment and the development of civic dispositions that lead them to stay involved. Students are often able to describe not only why they enjoy extracurricular and co-curricular activities, but also why these exercises are important to the development of their own civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Influences of Organizations, Individuals, and Funding

Policies are neither created nor implemented in a vacuum. State departments of education, through their policies, widely influence district practices, but they seem less able to communicate why particular policy goals are worthwhile and should be embraced. District and school administrative bodies more directly affect teacher priorities and actions, but their reach often is limited by state-level requirements and inadequate resources. Interested community organizations possess notable potential to enhance and reinforce beneficial state, district, and school practices, but the scope of their vision often is limited. Teachers have the power to transform lives year after year, but they also must react to the policies and practices that surround them. All of these organizations and individuals must work together to ensure that students receive the K-12 education needed for informed and effective citizenship.

Renewed Commitment to Civic Education

State education policies and school district practices often fail to affirm the importance of civic education directly and continuously throughout grades K-12. As the nation crosses into the next century, the entire American education system must renew its commitment to its civic mission, dedicating itself at every level to ensuring that students are transformed into active and engaged citizens.

Chapter 1. Introduction

> It has been recognized since the founding of the nation that education has a civic mission: to prepare informed, rational, humane, and participating citizens committed to the values and principles of American constitutional democracy.[1]

Civic education plays an essential role in strengthening our democratic society, since "democracy is … a machine that … must be consciously reproduced, one generation instructing the next in the knowledge and skills, as well as in the civic character and commitments, required for its sustenance."[2] In particular, its role is to prepare informed and responsible citizens and to promote their participation in the civic life of their communities.

While the burden of this responsibility is borne by all members of a democratic society, a special responsibility is placed on schools and educators. Students from kindergarten through grade 12 need to be provided with the necessary learning experiences to enable them to become responsible and actively participating citizens.

In its best form, civic education includes three essential, interrelated components:

1. "The **knowledge component** [is] the core of this framework [and] is embodied in the form of five significant and enduring questions … that [should] engage not only political philosophers and politicians … [but also] every thoughtful citizen. The five questions are:

    I. What are civic life, politics, and government?

    II. What are the foundations of the American political system?

    III. How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?

    IV. What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?

    V. What are the roles of citizens in American democracy?";[3]

2. "The **intellectual and participatory skills component** of civic education involves the use of knowledge to think and act effectively in a reasoned manner";[4] and

3. "[The] **civic dispositions [component]** refers to the inclinations or 'habits of the heart,' as de Tocqueville called them, that pervade all aspects of citizenship."[5]

Although most policymakers and educators give at least lip service to the importance of all the components of civic education in the schools, in reality state policies and school practices often fail to give any component of civic education the attention it deserves. Most information about these civic education policies and practices has been anecdotal, however; no comprehensive information exists.

Accordingly, in the fall of 1998, the Center for Center Education (CCE) invited the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin to conduct a research project during the 1998-99 school year on state and district civic education policies and practices. (See Appendix A for a summary of CCE's programs and publications.) This chapter provides the background and context for the project's final report. It highlights the lack of civic participation and knowledge among American youth, reviews national efforts to foster civic education in the schools, and describes state initiatives to establish content standards for core subject areas. Finally, it outlines the project plan and provides a brief overview of the entire project report.

Civic Participation and Civic Literacy of American Youth

Civic Participation

> While declining numbers of young people vote each year, this trend represents just one of the symptoms of an even more dangerous illness that has come to infect the roots of our democratic nation. Young people today lack interest, trust and knowledge about American politics, politicians and public life generally. In these and other respects, the future for American democracy seems gloomy, indeed.[6]

In November 1998, the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) sponsored a nationwide study of 15- to 24-year-old American youth. The published results document an alarming trend of civic disengagement among American youth.[7]

One of the most visible indicators of youthful civic disengagement is voting patterns or, more accurately, patterns of not voting. Eighteen-year-olds were first granted the right to vote in 1972. That year, 50 percent of 18- to 24-year-old youth voted. The 1996 percentage was down to 32, and participation of this age group in the 1998 elections was projected at below 20 percent. In 1996, less than half of the 18- to 24-year-old population was even registered to vote.[8]

Voluntarism, another indicator of youthful civic involvement, is on the rise. However, in 1998, only 16 percent of youths reported having volunteered in a political campaign. At the same time, 53 percent of young Americans reported having volunteered in non-political organizations, such as soup kitchens and hospitals, suggesting that the increase in youth voluntarism often is focused on personal, not public, goals. Indeed, the NASS report suggests that youth are motivated by a desire to help others in a personal way and that "youth have primarily an individualistic frame of mind."[9]

Young Americans have a good understanding of their rights as citizens. However, they have only a vague understanding of their responsibilities as citizens. Many have a self-centered vision of responsible citizenship that focuses on personal behavior and family stewardship. "Being an American" and "being a good American who cares about the good of the country" are vague and abstract concepts for youth, who often have little or no understanding of the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be effective and informed citizens. Indeed, "[t]heir personalized and often vague understanding of citizenship deters them from getting involved in the political process." [10]

It appears that this lack of civic engagement among school-age youth is increasingly characteristic of college students as well. As the Higher Education Research Institute reported in January 1999, "[College] freshman interest in politics continues to drop. A record low 25.9 percent of freshmen believe that 'keeping up to date with political affairs' is a very important or essential life goal. This compares with 26.7 percent just a year ago and a high of 57.8 percent in 1966.... [Moreover,] [o]nly 14 percent of freshmen say they frequently discuss politics, compared with a high of 29.9 percent in 1968." [11]

Other studies have confirmed this pattern of civic nonparticipation among citizens of all ages, not just youth. In its 1998 report, The National Commission on Civic Renewal reported that its "Index of National Civic Health, which measures and combines trends over the past quarter century in political participation, political and social trust, associational membership, family integrity and stability, and crime" is near its all-time low. Using 1974 as a baseline of 100, this index tracks changes in civic health relative to that year. Since 1991, the index has been at 85 or below every year.[12] If the United States is to reverse this trend, it is essential that increasing the civic participation of America's youth must be a national priority.

Civic Knowledge and Skills

The primary national assessments of students' knowledge, skills, and performance in various subject areas, including civics, have occurred through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Mandated by the U.S. Congress, NAEP has conducted assessments since 1969, most frequently in mathematics, science, and reading.

Civics has been assessed five times under NAEP: 1969-70 (separately), 1975-76 (as part of social studies), 1981-82 (as part of social studies), 1988 (separately), and 1998 (separately). As spelled out by the National Assessment Governing Board, which sets policy and the overall framework for NAEP, "NAEP is not a national test; however, it is a barometer or broad indicator of how much and how well students are learning." For each of the three grade levels assessed (4th, 8th, and 12th grades), this assessment "is intended to show students' civic knowledge and skills in terms of a set of achievement levels"—basic, proficient, and advanced.[13]

For example, 12th-grade students' knowledge at the basic level should include, but not be limited to, "an understanding of what is meant by civil society, constitutional government, and politics." Their knowledge at the proficient level should include, but not be limited to, "a good understanding of how constitutions can limit the power of government and support the rule of law," while at the advanced level it should include, but not be limited to, "a thorough and mature understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various forms of constitutional democracy."[14]

Although the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment results will not be available until the fall of 1999, too late for inclusion in this report, a review of the 1988 NAEP Civics Assessment results is informative—and disturbing. These results "revealed that students have only a superficial knowledge of civics and lack depth of understanding. For example, only 38 percent of 8th graders knew that Congress makes laws; and nearly half of high school seniors did not recognize typical examples of the federal system of checks and balances."[15]

The most comprehensive assessment of the 1988 NAEP Civics Assessment results is *Civic Education: What Makes Students Learn*, written by political scientists Richard G. Niemi (University of Rochester) and Jane Junn (Rutgers University).[16] Authors of books on political socialization, democratic citizenship, and related topics, Niemi and Junn confirm a lack of civic knowledge among American youth. "On a question about the number of representatives from each state in the U.S. House of Representatives, nearly 40 percent of the seniors answered incorrectly, believing that each state has two or three representatives or that the number varies according to the area of the state.... An even larger proportion—just over half of the students—did not know that 'under the United States Constitution, the power to tax belongs to Congress'.... And nearly two-thirds did not know that a political action committee (PAC) is 'an organization set up by a special-interest group to raise money for a candidate.'"[17]

Students also exhibit a lack of higher-order intellectual skills in applying civic knowledge and in connecting civics facts and concepts. As Niemi and Junn point out, "given the considerable classroom emphasis placed on how a bill becomes a law in Congress ... one might expect a large proportion of the seniors to be able [to] recognize a description of the process used in most states. In fact, less than two-thirds were able to do so.... [T]hey seem unable to apply what they have learned about one level to the other levels [of government]. This suggests that they lack a conceptual understanding to go along with the facts."[18]

As with civic participation, then, students' civic knowledge and intellectual skills are sorely lacking. Now, more than ever, however, students need to understand the roles of citizens in American democracy, the foundations of the American political system, the values and principles of a constitutional democracy, and the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs. The next section summarizes the development of voluntary national standards to foster and promote this civic knowledge in the United States.

National Standards for Civics and Government

With the goal of preparing informed and participating citizens committed to the values and principles of American constitutional democracy, the Center for Civic Education led the development of voluntary national standards for civics and government in the early 1990s, consulting with and seeking the contributions of more than 3,000 teachers, scholars, national and international government officials, and other community leaders. These voluntary standards were published in 1994 as the *National Standards for Civics and Government*, which includes a set of standards for each of the three grade groupings K-4, 5-8, and 9-12. The standards are intended to "help schools develop competent and responsible citizens who possess a reasoned commitment to the fundamental values and principles that are essential to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy" and to provide guidelines for what students should learn and be able to do in relation to civics and government.[19]

The national standards for civics and government are content standards for students. That is, they "are concerned with the knowledge students should acquire and the understandings they should develop, as well as with the intellectual and participatory skills students should develop in the course of their K-12 experience."[20]

> Content standards are **not** course outlines. They are **'exit' standards**.... Achievement of these standards should be fostered not only by explicit attention to civic education in the curriculum, but also in related subjects such as history, literature, geography, economics, and the sciences and by the informal curriculum of the school, the pattern of relations maintained in the school and its governance.... Standards alone cannot improve student achievement, teacher performance, or school quality, but they can be an important stimulus for change. They provide widely agreed upon guidelines for what all students in this nation should learn and be able to do in the field of civics and government. They are useful in the development of curricular frameworks, course outlines, textbooks, professional development programs, and systems of assessment.[21]

The development of the national standards for civics and government occurred within the context of comprehensive education reform. *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative of Education Reform,* released in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, showed how critical the situation was—"a rising tide of mediocrity in elementary and secondary school"—and how the American public education system was not fulfilling its responsibilities and keeping pace with the nation's needs.[22] *A Nation at Risk* and subsequent reports stimulated a national debate about the necessity of broad systemic reform to promote and enhance significant improvements in schools and to create incentives (e.g., standards) for high student performance.

Systemic education reform received considerably more attention in 1989 as a result of the Education Summit convened by President George Bush with the nation's governors. For the first time, national and state political leaders from both political parties collectively addressed the broad outlines of an education reform agenda. The six national education goals that emerged from the 1989 Summit were in turn included among eight national education goals articulated in 1994 by President Bill Clinton, the U.S. Congress, and others through the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which provided the framework and stimulus for the development of content standards in numerous subject matter areas.

Since 1989, national voluntary standards have been developed in core academic areas identified by Goals 2000, including English, mathematics, science, civics and government, economics, the arts, history, and geography. The development of the civics and government standards was noteworthy because of broad bipartisan support; however, the development of a few of the other subject area standards, especially U.S. and world history, generated disagreement about the standards' topics and expectations.

One of the most intensively debated issues has been whether national standards in each subject area should be voluntary or mandatory. Some scholars and policymakers have made persuasive cases for national standards. For example, Diane Ravitch, writing in 1996, claimed that national standards are a necessity in an advanced society.

> The United States is one nation, not fifty independent states. There is no such thing as Nevada science, New Jersey mathematics, and Illinois English. The science, mathematics and English that students need to know is the same everywhere.... Some day, when we get serious about education standards again, we will think of them as a series of concentric circles. One ring will be the skills and ideas that everyone in the nation (and the world) needs to know. Another ring will be peculiar to the state (reflecting its history, geography, and regional concerns). And the third will be local (supplying whatever the community cares deeply about). This approach ensures enough uniformity so that children have equal opportunity to learn what their peers are learning elsewhere; and it ensures that the state and locality can teach what their children need to know.[23]

Nevertheless, the current political, social, and education reform climate in the United States has led to a general agreement that national academic content standards should be voluntary. Consequently, academic content standards are clearly and unambiguously a state responsibility. Thus, to conclude this overview of the context within which state civics standards are being implemented, the next section briefly notes the overall status of state standards today.

State Standards

While standards-based education reform is a national priority, it is a state responsibility. Most states have adopted, or are in the process of adopting, state standards in one or more of the subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Yet there is considerable variation among the states with respect to the standards they have adopted.

In January 1999, *Education Week* reported that, as of December 1998, 40 states had developed and adopted standards in the four core academic subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, it reported that four states (Arizona, Nevada, South Carolina, and Rhode Island) had standards in only three of these core areas; three states (Montana, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming) had standards in only two of these core areas; one state (North Dakota) had standards in only one core area; one state (Idaho) was in the process of developing standards; and one state (Iowa) did not have standards.[24]

Even greater differences in states' approaches to assessment exist. According to Achieve, Inc., as of October 1998, only 18 states had assessments in all the four academic subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. Forty-four states assessed both English/language arts and mathematics, 23 states assessed science, and 21 states assessed history/social science.[25]

Likewise, there is considerable variation in the quality of state standards—or at least in the perceived quality of state standards. Although Congress mandated in 1994 the creation of a panel charged with assessing states' content standards, the panel was abolished even before its members were nominated because of strong opposition to federal intrusion into education. In the absence of such a body, several organizations have assessed and ranked states' standards, including the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the Council for Basic Education (CBE), and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. These organizations, however, have assessed different elements of state standards and have used different assessment criteria.

AFT annually releases a report in which it analyzes the quality of academic state standards. In its November 1998 report, *Making Standards Matter, 1998*, AFT judged state standards in English, math, science, and social studies on the basis of clarity and specificity and highlighted their strengths and weaknesses with respect to whether "the standards can support a common, challenging curriculum."[26] Of particular interest with respect to civic education is that AFT found social studies standards across the states to be particularly weak, especially because of their lack of specific references to U.S. and world history. For example, "[o]nly six states [Alabama, California, Maryland, New York, Oregon, Virginia] have social studies standards that are clear, specific, and grounded in content across all three levels of schooling. Standards tend to be clearest and most specific at the high school level—15 states meet the criteria. Thirteen states are clear and specific at the middle [school] level compared to just eight at the elementary [school] level."[27]

CBE, a nonprofit group active in promoting the development and implementation of high academic standards for all children, has "designed English language arts and math frameworks against which to evaluate the standards in those subjects—an approach that essentially determines the extent to which states' standards match CBE's standards."[28]

In July 1998, the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation released *The State of State Standards*, a report in which it summarized its five earlier reports evaluating state standards in English, history, geography, mathematics, and science and gave each state an overall grade for its state standards. It is noteworthy that no state received an overall grade of A from the Fordham Foundation, and just three states (Arizona, California, and Texas) received an overall grade of B. In general, the foundation viewed state standards as "vague and nebulous," "hostile to knowledge," and "a grave threat to standards-based education reform."[29]

Even when the assessments of state standards are consistent, however, there remains a major problem with respect to civics. The existence of state social studies standards is no guarantee that civics standards exist. In addition, assessments of state social studies standards seldom provide assessments of civics standards, even if the latter exist; what students should know and be able to do in civics and government is frequently not addressed in social studies standards.

Moreover, the effective implementation of state academic standards is substantially dependent on what occurs in schools and classrooms at the local level. Students and communities differ greatly in their educational needs, perspectives, and resources. In addition, states vary with respect to the extent to which they emphasize either state or local control over education policies and practices (e.g., curricula and instructional materials). For example, Texas standards are mandated statewide for all school districts, whereas Nebraska has voluntary state standards because of its philosophy of local control over schools.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that standards alone are insufficient to improve student outcomes. This improvement requires articulating not only goals and standards but also assessment and accountability systems. In addition, effective instructional materials, enhanced professional development for future and present teachers, and greater attention to the influences of organizations, individuals, and funding on civic education policies and practices are necessary at state, school district, and school levels.

Project Plan

This report is the result of an assessment that reviews and documents state K-12 civic education policies and related requirements nationwide and identifies and examines factors that shape K-12 civic education policies and practices in schools. It addresses not only standards but also curricula, instructional materials, assessment, professional development, and extracurricular and co-curricular activities. It does not, however, attempt to assess students' civic knowledge, skills, or dispositions.

Invited by CCE, the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin (LBJ School) conducted this standards project between September 1998 and May 1999. The LBJ School's research team, led by Professor Kenneth Tolo, consisted of 15 graduate students with substantial professional experience in public, private, and nonprofit organizations.

The project's research addressed the following questions:

1. What state civic education (K-12) standards, constitutional and statutory mandates, and related state policies and requirements exist? What state civic education (K-12) teacher training, certification, and professional development policies and requirements exist? What state civic education (K-12) assessments of students exist?

2. What state, community, and other factors shape civic education (K-12) policies and practices at the district level? How does this occur? What are these policies and practices?

3. What district, state, community, and other factors shape civic education (K-12) policies and practices at the school and classroom levels? How does this occur? What are these policies and practices? How do districts and schools monitor and assess their implementation?

4. To what extent do school and classroom practices foster and encourage civic knowledge, civic participation, and civic dispositions?

Project researchers gathered social studies standards and related information about state civic education policies from all 50 states and the District of Columbia through written surveys, telephone interviews, and, especially, state departments of education sites on the World Wide Web. State social studies supervisors and CCE state coordinators in all states received the project's state survey. This participation by major state players in civic education, combined with the state departments of education Web sites, provided a means to validate information and responses. Researchers summarized the results of these state surveys, as well as assessed the civics content of state social studies standards with respect to their effectiveness in promoting civic dispositions, civic intellectual skills, and civic knowledge.

To analyze more fully the factors (including state civics standards) that shape civic education policies and practices at the school district and school level, project researchers supplemented their state-level analyses through on-site visits in 13 school districts across the United States (two districts in each of California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, and Ohio; one district in Texas). During these visits, researchers met with state and school district social studies coordinators, classroom teachers, students, and others (e.g., university professors of education) and observed civics classes. Researchers also distributed surveys to district social studies coordinators and to secondary social studies teachers in each of these districts, as well as in a second district in Texas.

The selection of the seven states for researchers' visits was based on discussions with CCE staff and on a variety of criteria, including geographic diversity, urban/rural diversity, state influence in national education reform, types of state civics standards, and extent to which curricular decisions are centralized at the state level or under local control. Within the selected states, criteria for selecting school districts included urban/suburban/rural diversity, demographic diversity, and permission to distribute secondary social studies teacher surveys.

Overview of Report

Civics and social studies standards and related requirements have existed in one or more states for almost a decade. Yet there has been no recent comprehensive examination of these standards and requirements that also addresses the factors (including the state standards) that shape school-level civic education policies and practices. This report provides this examination, as well as offers recommendations for improving the civics content of state standards and its implementation at the local level.

The report is organized into chapters that discuss and analyze specific topics related to the project's focus on state policies and district practices. Chapter 2 reviews state constitutional provisions and legislative statutes that promote civic education. It also examines how state social studies standards, assessment, teacher certification, and other policies build on these provisions and statutes to create state civics frameworks. Recognizing the centrality of state standards in these civics frameworks, chapters 3 through 5 examine more closely the extent to which the civics content in state standards promotes civic dispositions, civic intellectual skills, and civic knowledge, respectively. The first two of these chapters examine the standards in all 50 states; chapter 5 looks at the seven states that project researchers visited.

The second half of the report focuses on district-level K-12 civic education policies and practices in seven states and on the factors (including state civics frameworks) that shape these policies and practices. Chapters 6 through 10 examine, in turn, the following five topics relative to civic education: standards, curricula, and course content; instructional materials; assessment; professional development; and extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Complementing these five chapters, chapter 11 examines individual, organizational, and funding influences on civic education at the district level. Chapter 12 concludes the report, highlighting major findings and providing recommendations that support the development of sound, sustainable, and long-term commitments to civic education in grades K-12 in all states and reinforce the actions recommended in chapters 3 through 11.

Notes

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[18] Ibid., p. 33.

[19] Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government*, p. v.

[20] Ibid., p. 3.

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[22] University of California at Los Angeles, *History of 20th Century Education: Selected Issues: 1983, A Nation at Risk* (Los Angeles, California, n.d.), p. 1. Online. Available: http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/courses/ed191/assignment1/vietvu.html. Accessed: April 7, 1999.

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Chapter 2. State Civic Education Policies and Requirements

> Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments.... It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities.... It is the very foundation of good citizenship.[1]

These words are as true now as they were more than 40 years ago, when Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote them for the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark decision *Brown v. Board of Education*. Few, if any, state education policymakers would disagree with the notion that their decisions and actions can have important effects on students' civic knowledge, intellectual skills, and dispositions. Indeed, state-level policies, notwithstanding the national activities discussed in chapter 1, are the most crucial foundation of efforts to enhance the level of citizenship among the nation's students.

States face a myriad of competing priorities. State education policymakers encounter demands on their attention and resources from a seemingly innumerable array of sources. With such pressures, finding time and money to strengthen civic education is a daunting challenge. Nevertheless, an examination of the formal policies on civic education in all 50 states and the District of Columbia gives important insights into how states are preparing children for their "most basic public responsibilities."[2]

The majority of state policies regarding civic education exist in rules and regulations promulgated by state boards or departments of education. However, state civic education policies reach beyond executive rules and regulations to statutory mandates and even state constitutional provisions. As one moves up this hierarchy, policy statements tend to become more broad and less specific to the actual events within the classroom itself. Nevertheless, it is important to explore every level of this hierarchy to provide a complete picture of state policies regarding civic education.

Following a review of state constitutional provisions and legislative statutes that promote civic responsibility and civic competence, this chapter analyzes the ways in which state content standards, assessment, teacher certification, and other policies build on these provisions and statutes to create state civics frameworks within which school districts implement civic education policies and practices. Chapters 3 through 5 examine more closely state standards' coverage of civic dispositions, skills, and knowledge.

State Constitutions

No fewer than 13 states have constitutional provisions that discuss, in some way, the importance of education for the maintenance of an effective and informed citizenry. The relevant constitutional provisions are all mandates either for a system of public education or for the legislature to promote education more generally. The provisions make it clear that one of the primary goals of the states' education efforts is to promote good citizenship, democracy, and the preservation of rights and liberties. Table 2.1 summarizes these 13 states' provisions.

Table 2.1
Summaries of State Constitutional Provisions Addressing Civics

States	Summaries of Constitutional Provisions
Arkansas	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
California	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government; mandates instruction in certain civic values
Idaho	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
Indiana	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government; mandates instruction in certain civic values
Maine	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
Massachusetts	Mandates instruction in certain civic values
Minnesota	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
Missouri	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
Montana	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
New Hampshire	Mandates instruction in certain civic values
North Carolina	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
North Dakota	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government
Texas	Mandates a system of public education in order to create a citizenry more capable of maintaining a free government

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.

For instance, the Indiana Constitution notes that "[k]nowledge and learning [are] essential to the preservation of a free government."[3] The Maine Constitution concurs, noting, "A general diffusion of the advantages of education [is] essential to the preservation of rights and liberties of the people."[4] The Arkansas, Idaho, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Texas Constitutions all cite similar reasoning in authorizing systems of public education.[5]

None of the constitutional provisions actually requires any form of instruction in citizenship, government, rights, or liberties. Several of them come relatively close, however, by requiring the legislature to support the promotion of certain values. The California Constitution, for example, requires the legislature to "encourage by all suitable means the promotion of intellectual, scientific, *moral* and agricultural improvement."[6] Perhaps "moral" improvement includes citizenship. The Indiana Constitution has an essentially identical requirement.[7]

The Constitutions of New Hampshire and Massachusetts have somewhat more substantial provisions. The New Hampshire provision requires that "it shall be the duty of the legislators and magistrates ... to countenance and inculcate the principles of humanity and general benevolence, public and private charity, industry and economy, honesty and punctuality, sincerity, sobriety, and all social affections, and generous sentiments, among the people." [8] The relevant provision of the Massachusetts Constitution is very similar, except it puts "frugality" in the place of "economy" and "good humor" in the place of "sobriety."[9]

Though none of the 13 state constitutions explicitly requires instruction in civics, they all explicitly state that a more informed citizenry is a worthwhile goal. Indeed, it is somewhat strange that only a minority of the 50 states decided that fostering citizenship was an important enough goal to state it in their foundational document. Perhaps the authors of state constitutions assumed that civics was an obvious topic that would be addressed in public education and that specific legislation and regulations would be a more appropriate place for the requirements. Perhaps, alternatively, they did not think civics instruction particularly important, and they believed that general education would suffice to prepare citizens. Whatever the reason, the possibility of specifically requiring civic education was left to statutes and regulations.

State Statutes

Each state crafts statutes through its own legislative procedure and personnel. The obvious result is that the content and structure of statutes vary widely from state to state.

Many state policies and provisions concerning civic education are included in broad education statutes. Iowa, for example, includes its social studies course requirements in a statute that also provides course requirements for math, science, English, and a number of other subjects.[10] Many of the course requirement, general instruction, assessment, and standards provisions are similarly structured.

Other state statutory schemes have elevated civics to a level of priority apparently higher than that of other topics. Indiana, for example, put its general curriculum requirements, including its social studies and citizenship requirements, in section 5 of the "Mandatory Curriculum" chapter in its state code. Sections 1-4.5 of the chapter are all on civics topics, with the headings "Constitutions," "Constitutions; interdisciplinary course," "Posting of certain writings, documents and records [of American history or heritage]," "System of government; American history," "Morals instruction," and "Good citizenship instruction."[11]

Not all states have their civics statutes so neatly arranged in one part of one chapter of their codes. Louisiana, for example, has several statutes related to civics. They are all in one part of the code, but they are mixed in and interspersed with laws on such diverse topics as "Driver education and training; fees" and "Kindness to dumb animals."[12]

Adding to the confusion is the fact that statutes are not necessarily rewritten every time a statutory change is made; the legislature often just adds or takes away a provision. A notable exception, however, is the "Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century." This interrelated series of statutes states principles, goals, and specific programs and requirements for education in a coherent, unified document.

No fewer than 26 states have statutes specifically related to civic education. Some of the statutes are similar to the constitutional mandates, which talk about citizenship but do not require civics instruction. The Oregon law, for example, states, "The Legislative Assembly believes that education is a major civilizing influence on the development of a humane, responsible and informed citizenry."[13] Most of the statutes, however, call for action. Even the Oregon statutory scheme goes on to include specific, action-oriented provisions relating to civics, such as the development and regular review of "Essential Learning Skills and rigorous academic content standards in ... civics...."[14]

Overall, the states' various civic education statutory provisions can be divided generally into four groups: those calling for instruction on particular topics; those mandating standards and assessments; those requiring specific courses; and those calling for other, specific (and often idiosyncratic) actions. Table 2.2 places each of the 26 states having civic education statutes in the most appropriate of these four groups. In this way, legal mandates run from being very general, demanding instruction on certain topics but not adding further parameters on the method of instruction, to being very focused and specific, prescribing actual courses to be taught or other programs to foster civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Some states have statutes that fit into more than one of these categories; some states' statutes fit into only one.

Table 2.2
State Statutes Specifically Addressing Civic Education

Type of Statute	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
General instruction only	20	10	CA, CT, FL, ID, MA, NY, RI, TX, VA, WV
Assessments and/or standards	10	5	IL, ME, MO, OR, WY
Specific courses	22	11	AL, GA, IA, KS, LA, ME, MI, MO, NH, OH, WI
Other statutes	14	7	AL, AR, CA, GA, NE, NY, OH
No statutes on civic education found	48	24	AK, AZ, CO, DE, HI, IN, KY, MD, MN, MS, MT, NC, ND, NJ, NM, NV, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, UT, VT, WA

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Note: Unlike later tables in this chapter, research for this table did not include the District of Columbia. The number of states does not add up to 50, and percentages do not add up to 100 percent, because these categories are not mutually exclusive; i.e., inclusion under one category does not prohibit inclusion under another one (with the exception of the category "General instruction only," which does not include states with responses in either the "Assessments and/or standards" or "Specific courses" category).

General Instruction

A number of states have enacted provisions that require instruction in civics but do not require any specific courses, standards, or assessments, leaving the details to regulatory authorities, school districts, or schools. Some, like Illinois and Oregon, have general provisions of this sort but also have more specific provisions about assessment and standards.

For instance, West Virginia specifically requires instruction in "civics":

> [S]chools shall require regular courses of instruction by the completion of the twelfth grade in the history of the United States, *in civics*, in the constitution of the United States, and in the government of the state of West Virginia for the purpose of teaching, fostering and perpetuating the ideals, principles and spirit of political and economic democracy in America and increasing the knowledge of the organization and machinery of the government of the United States and of the State of West Virginia.[15]

Noticeably absent from West Virginia's provision, however, is a specific time requirement (e.g., one semester) of the sort that accompanies requirements concerning "regular courses of instruction" in other states' statutes.

Some states' statutes require instruction on specific "items" of American citizenship. For example, Idaho requires instruction on the United States Constitution; the "proper use, display and history of and respect for the American flag"; and the pledge of allegiance, the national anthem, and the song "America."[16] Idaho law also mandates that in order to meet a constitutional provision of thoroughness, the public school system must emphasize, among other things, "[t]he importance of students acquiring the skills to enable them to be responsible citizens."[17]

Florida's statutorily required topics have grown, through a series of amendments, to include 16 items. The first 5 are all standard civics topics: the Declaration of Independence; "Our republican form of government" and the Federalist Papers; the United States Constitution; the flag; and "the elements of civil government."[18] Later provisions require instruction on the Holocaust, African American history, agriculture, intoxication, kindness to animals, state history, conservation of natural resources, health education, "Hispanic contributions to the United States," "women's contributions to the United States," and anything else prescribed by law or rule. A Florida statute adds a second list of topics, some of which are civics related, that are merely optional; this list includes, for example, such topics as character development and law-related education.[19] Florida does require content standards in social studies, but there are no statutory mandates specifically requiring instruction in topics of civic education.[20]

California law includes a similar list of topics:

> Each teacher shall endeavor to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, patriotism, and a true comprehension of the rights, duties,

> and dignity of American citizenship, and the meaning of equality and human dignity, including the promotion of harmonious relations, kindness toward domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures, to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity, and falsehood, and to instruct them in manners and morals and the principles of a free government.[21]

The Connecticut Legislature also has created a list of mandated subject matter, requiring (among other topics) "social studies, including, but not limited to, citizenship, economics, geography, government and history."[22] Another statute is labeled "Courses in United States history, government and duties and responsibilities of citizenship." Contrary to what the name implies, however, the statute does not require specific courses. It merely commands every school to have a "program" in these areas and states that no student may graduate "who has not been found to be familiar with said subjects."[23]

Washington law requires the study of the Constitutions of the United States and Washington as a prerequisite for graduation but does not provide statutory guidance concerning when or how that instruction is to be provided.[24] Washington's statute also places among its educational system's core goals "the knowledge and skills essential to … [k]now and apply the core concepts and principles of … civics and history."[25]

New York requires courses of instruction in "patriotism, citizenship and human rights issues" and in "the history, meaning, significance and effect" of the United States and New York Constitutions and the Declaration of Independence.[26] Texas' simpler provisions require school districts to offer a number of subjects as required curricula, including "social studies, consisting of Texas, United States, and world history, government, and geography."[27] Virginia also requires "citizenship" instruction in a simple provision included in a list of required instruction topics.[28]

Rhode Island also has general mandates: "Commencing with the fourth grade in elementary schools instruction shall be given in the history and government of Rhode Island, and in every high school thorough instruction shall be given in the Constitution and government of Rhode Island and in the Constitution and government of the United States."[29]

Finally, Massachusetts' civics provision is simple and straightforward, requiring civic education but no specific courses, standards, or assessment:

> In all public elementary and high schools American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, and in all public high schools the Constitution of the Commonwealth and local history and government, shall be taught as required subjects for the purpose of promoting civic service and a greater knowledge thereof, and of fitting the pupils, morally and intellectually, for duties of citizenship.[30]

Common to all of these provisions is a lack of statutory instructions to guide educators in teaching the noted subjects. Through these statutes, legislatures have provided educators with a list of topics related to civic education that those bodies feel must be addressed in the course of students' schooling. Beyond the set of topics, however, decisions on how these subjects are to be covered are left to state, school district, and school educators.

Assessments and Standards

A number of states move beyond simply stating a few specific topics that must be covered by general instruction. Several states require some form of testing or other assessment in civics. A few others require, by statute, the specification of civics standards.

For instance, Illinois law requires a test on topics related to civics but does not require a specific course of instruction. The statute simply requires that "American patriotism and the principles of representative government, as enunciated in the American Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the proper use and display of the American flag *shall be taught.*" The statute then follows with the assessment provision: "No student shall receive a certificate of graduation without passing a satisfactory examination upon such subjects."[31]

Oregon has a number of statutory provisions related to civics that are mostly general in nature. The "public school system" is required, for example, to provide students "an educational background to the end that they will function successfully in a constitutional republic, a participatory democracy and a multicultural nation and world."[32] Other provisions, however, call for specific action. One Oregon law created an extensive student assessment system that requires assessment at several grades in seven areas, four of which are social studies, one of which is "civics" (the other six areas are mathematics, science, history, geography, economics, and English).[33] Oregon also requires "rigorous academic content standards" in each of the seven areas.[34]

Maine law requires the Department of Education to establish "high academic standards at all grade levels" in a number of areas, one of which is "social studies, including history, economics and civics."[35] Other statutes require a course in American history, which includes "the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship"; a course in Maine history; and two high school years of "[s]ocial studies and history, including American history and government."[36]

Finally, Wyoming school districts must provide "educational programs sufficient to meet uniform student performance standards" set by the State Board of Education in areas including "Government and civics, including state and federal constitutions."[37] Wyoming also requires, in all schools and colleges supported by the state, instruction in the Wyoming and United States Constitutions, "including the study of and devotion to American institutions and ideals."[38]

These provisions all go further than those statutes addressing requirements for general topics of instruction. Some laws insist that students satisfactorily prove their mastery of particular civics subjects through some form of assessment. Other statutes mandate the creation of a set of standards for levels of student learning in areas related to civics. Thus, these statutes not only prescribe the communication of a set of topics but give some indication concerning how such communication will be evaluated.

Specific Courses

Statutory provisions requiring courses in civics or related topics are the most common category. This approach involves more specific statutory direction than the previous two categories, mandating not only the topic of instruction but the year and length of the course as well. Some states, like Michigan, require a course called "civics" specifically. Most of the others require instruction in government, constitutions, and other civics topics.

New Hampshire's statute is a good example of the sort of course work that many of the statutes require. It calls for "regular courses of instruction," beginning no later than the eighth grade, in "the history, government and constitutions of the United States and New Hampshire, including the organization and operation of New Hampshire municipal, county and state government and of the federal government." The statute also specifically mandates these topics as an "identifiable component" of "a year's course" in the history and government of the United States and New Hampshire.[39]

Michigan law also requires "regular courses of instruction," starting no later than the eighth grade, similar in content to the New Hampshire provision.[40] The Michigan statute's other provision requires a one-semester "civics" course in high school to include "the form and functions of the federal, state and local governments" and to "stress the rights and responsibilities of citizens." The statute makes high school graduation conditional upon the successful completion of this course.[41]

Louisiana similarly requires a one-semester "course in civics" for graduation.[42] Louisiana law also requires study of the Declaration of Independence in elementary school, the United States Constitution beginning in eighth grade, and the Federalist Papers in high school.[43]

Iowa has an extensive system of course requirements. Iowa schools are required to offer five units of social studies (a unit is a one-year course), including an emphasis on voting requirements and procedures. Students are required to take one unit of United States history and one-half unit of United States government, including voting procedures, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.[44] General social studies instruction is required in grades 1 through 8.[45]

Ohio's statute requires one unit of American history and government.[46] In 2001, the requirement will change to one-half unit of American history and one-half unit of American government.[47]

In Kansas, the relevant statutes are somewhat more vague in their requirements: they do not set specific amounts of time to be spent on civics courses. They do, however, clearly require specific course work. One statute explains that all high schools must "give *a course* of instruction concerning the government and institutions of the United States ... and no student who has not taken and satisfactorily passed *such course* shall ... [have] completed the course requirements necessary for graduation." The same law requires a "complete course of instruction" in several civics topics in elementary schools.[48] Another statute directs the State Board of Education to "provide for a course of instruction in Kansas history and government," to be required for high school graduation.[49]

Alabama has perhaps the broadest statutory course requirements related to civics, even though the statutes do not mention civics specifically. The legislature mandated four years of high school social studies, "with an emphasis on history, music history, fine arts history, geography, economics and political science." The statute also requires instruction on the historical documents cited in these laws.[50]

Wisconsin requires "3 credits of social studies including state and local government" for graduation.[51] Another Wisconsin statute sets out the "[e]ducational goals and expectations" for public education in the state. One of the four core areas is citizenship, and the statute provides a list of citizenship topics and goals that each school board is to include in its district's "instructional program." (The other three areas are "[a]cademic skills and knowledge," "[v]ocational skills," and "[p]ersonal development.")[52]

Indiana has a broad range of statutes calling for civics instruction. The most specific requirement calls for "not less than one (1) year of school work, in the historical, political, civic, sociological, economic, and philosophical aspects of the constitutions of Indiana and the United States."[53]

Missouri requires "regular courses of instruction" in the constitutions, history, and institutions of the state and the United States beginning in seventh grade. It also requires, for high school graduation, a class (of at least one semester) in the local, state, and federal governments and the electoral process.[54]

Georgia law requires two relevant specific courses for high school graduation: one in "the background, history and development of the federal and state governments" and the other in the history and Constitutions of Georgia and the United States, "including the study of American institutions and ideals."[55]

Finally, Missouri law goes one step further by requiring, for graduation, an examination on the provisions and principles of the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions and the history and institutions of the United States.[56]

The laws discussed in this section are linked by their specific instructions to educators on the amount of time that the state government expects students to spend on civics topics. Rather than merely mandate the teaching of a set of topics and then let educators decide how much time will be dedicated to that task, these statutes define both the subjects that are to be taught and the time that should be given to their teaching. Of the three categories described here (i.e., general instruction, assessments and standards, and specific courses), the provisions relating to specific courses are the most detailed.

Other Provisions

Several states have enacted statutes that relate to civic education but do not fit any of the three categories above. These statutes address particular aspects of civics. Many of the states in this category also have statutes that deal with general instruction, standards and assessment, and specific courses.

For example, an Arkansas law requires a state clearinghouse for information on character and citizenship education programs to assist local school districts, though implementation of such programs is optional.[57] Another Arkansas law requires the director of General Education to develop and disseminate materials for teaching "current Arkansas laws of particular relevance to students," such as laws dealing with school attendance, truancy, crime, curfews, and drivers' licenses.[58] A similar provision requires creation and dissemination of materials about the contribution of African Americans. Another statute allows students to receive a credit toward graduation for 75 hours of community service.[59] This statute requires that the service be approved and documented and that the program include "preparation, action, and reflection components." Thus, Arkansas has enacted a number of statutory provisions related to civic education that supplement state provisions mandating one semester of Arkansas history after the sixth grade as well as state history instruction in elementary schools.[60]

In 1998, the California Assembly earmarked $180,000 for the purpose of developing middle school civic education curricula.[61]

Ohio has an extensive statute authorizing community service programs in schools and setting procedural and substantive standards for those programs. Among the most interesting of these requirements is that if high school credit is granted for community service, half of the course must be "devoted to classroom study of such matters as civic responsibility, the history of volunteerism, and community service training."[62]

Iowa requires every high school to provide students who are at least "seventeen and one-half years of age," twice a year, the opportunity to register to vote.[63]

New York requires that one week be designated, each year, for uniform instruction and exercises in all the state's public schools on the Bill of Rights articles in the New York and U.S. Constitutions.[64] A Georgia statute requires the State Board of Education to develop a "comprehensive character education program" available for optional implementation by local school boards.[65]

Alabama created, by statute, the "Alabama Compact for Leadership and Citizenship Education." This voluntary association of public, private, and nonprofit groups is authorized to develop and create activities for youth and materials and programs for use in the schools.[66] Another Alabama statute requires the development of a "comprehensive character education program" to provide character education (and teach a long list of prescribed traits) for at least ten minutes of every school day.[67]

Nebraska has a unique statute, perhaps the most interesting statute related to civic education. Enacted initially in 1949, the statute requires every school board to appoint a "committee on Americanism." The committee must examine all the textbooks used in teaching "history and civil government" and "[a]ssure themselves as to the character of all teachers employed and their knowledge and acceptance of the American form of government." The statute also requires specific teaching-hour requirements in topics designed to "develop a love of country."[68] However, John LeFeber, the director of Social Science Education for the Nebraska Department of Education, describes this statute as a "McCarthy era" law, and he points out that the committees are not very active and enforcement is strictly local.[69]

All of these provisions represent attempts by states to complement other laws and regulations dealing with the teaching of civics topics. These statutes all seem to convey what the constitutional provisions discussed above declare explicitly, namely, that the creation of a more informed and effective citizenry is a worthwhile goal.

State Standards and Other Policies

Constitutions and statutes form only one part of the states' civic education framework. For example, while few state constitutions and statutes require civics coverage in state standards, many states address civics topics. State legislatures have granted significant policymaking authority to state education agencies and, in some cases, have authorized agencies to create standards having civics content.

This section presents an overview of civic education policies in each state, regardless of whether the policies result from statutes or agency rules. Specifically, this section looks at four types of state policies that shape and promote civic education in the states: content standards, assessment, teacher certification, and other policies.

Information on these state policies was compiled using a survey designed to assess state civic education policies and requirements in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.[70] (See Appendix B for a copy of this survey instrument.) Project researchers first attempted to complete the surveys by using state departments of education World Wide Web sites and visiting by phone with state department of education officials. Researchers then sent each state survey, with its preliminary information, to the state social studies supervisor in that state. Many coordinators returned the surveys; some did not. Subsequently, researchers sent the state survey to CCE's state coordinator in each state, most of whom reviewed and added to the survey responses and returned them to the researchers. In this manner, survey responses from the 50 states and the District of Columbia were obtained. Survey questions that yielded highly incomplete responses are not reported in this report.

Policies Regarding Standards

As chapter 1 notes, education has undergone a standards "revolution" in the past decade, and civic education is no exception. Even if few states have freestanding civics standards, the vast majority of states have civics topics included in some form in their state standards. Indeed, only two states report that they neither have such standards nor are in the process of creating them. These states are Iowa, which has no plans for content standards in any subject, and Pennsylvania, which does not plan any standards with civics content. Tables 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 show, for each state, the most recent implementation date of its standards with civics content, the types of presentation of this content in standards (e.g., freestanding or integrated), and the mandatory/optional nature of the civics content, respectively.

Table 2.3 shows that nearly every state and the District of Columbia have promulgated standards that in some way incorporate civics content.

Table 2.3
Implementation Dates of State Standards with Civics Content

Date of Most Recent Implementation	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
1992	2	1	MD
1993	6	3	ND, OK, WA
1994	8	4	AK, KY, MI, OH
1995	8	4	DE, NH, NJ, VA
1996	24	12	AR, DC, FL, HI, IN, KS, MO, NM, NY, TN, UT, VT
1997	14	7	IL, LA, MA, ME, NC, TX, WV
1998	18	9	AL, CA, CO, CT, GA, MN, NE, OR, WI
New standards expected	17	8	AZ, ID,[1] MS,[2] MT, NV, RI, SC,[1] SD,[1] WY
No standards planned	4	2	IA, PA

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.

Notes: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

[1] These states have already created and published draft versions of their standards.

[2] In Mississippi, standards were approved and piloted in 1998. Full-scale implementation is not expected until the 1999-2000 school year.

As table 2.4 shows, states have addressed civics topics in their academic standards in various ways: by promulgating separate civic standards, by specifying civics topics as an explicit section in the standards, and by integrating civics content in the standards.

The largest category consists of those states (23) in which civics content is an explicit section of a state's social studies standards. Florida, for example, divides its K-12 standards into four grade-level groups, but within each group there are four explicit subsections, one of which is "Government and the Citizen."

Almost as large is the category consisting of those states (18) in which civics content is integrated in a state's social studies or other standards. States in this group have broad social studies standards, some divided into courses (e.g., "World History"), others into grade levels, and still others into topics. Civics requirements are mixed with other requirements in this standards approach.

The smallest category of states addressing civics in their standards includes states in which civics topics appear as separate standards—a separate document. Only Alaska, Colorado, and Vermont structure their standards this way.

Table 2.4
Presentation of Civics Content in State Standards

Types of Presentation of Civics Content in State Standards	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Separate civics standards	6	3	AK, CO, VT
Explicit section in social studies standards	45	23	AR, CT, DE, FL, HI, ID,[1] IL, KY, LA, MA, ME, MI, ND, NH,[2] OH, OK,[3] OR, SD,[4] TN, TX, WA, WI, WV[5]
Integrated in social studies or other standards	35	18	AL, CA,[6] DC,[7] GA, IN,[8] KS, MD,[9] MN,[10] MO, MS,[11] NC, NE, NJ, NM, NY, SC, UT, VA[12]
Do not currently exist	14	7	AZ, IA, MT, NV, PA, RI, WY

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.

[1] In Idaho, standards exist in draft form only, so in table 2.3 Idaho is listed in the category "New standards expected." The Idaho survey respondent explained that Idaho hopes to implement them for the 1999-2000 school year.

[2] In New Hampshire, civics is in social studies as an explicit section from kindergarten through grade 10 and integrated in social studies in grades 11 and 12.

[3] In Oklahoma, civics is integrated in social studies in grades K-5 and is in social studies as an explicit section in grades 6-12.

[4] In South Dakota, standards are still in draft form, so in table 2.3 South Dakota is listed in the category "New standards expected." Civics is in social studies as an explicit section, except in grades 6-8, where it is integrated in social studies.

[5] In West Virginia, civics is in social studies as an explicit section, except in grades 9-12, where it is in U.S./World Studies.

[6] In California, civics is integrated in social studies, except in grade 9, where there are no civics standards, and in grade 12, where it is in social studies as an explicit section.

[7] In the District of Columbia, civics is integrated in history.

[8] In Indiana, civics is integrated in social studies, except in grades 9-12, where it is integrated in a variety of courses.

[9] In Maryland, civics is integrated in social studies, except in grades 9-12, where it is integrated in world history, U.S. history, and government.

[10] In Minnesota, civics is integrated in the learning area "People and Cultures."

[11] In Mississippi, standards were approved and piloted in 1998. Full-scale implementation is not expected until the 1999-2000 school year.

[12] In Virginia, civics is integrated in social studies, except in grades 1-3, where it is in social studies as an explicit section.

Arizona, Iowa, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wyoming currently do not have standards that cover topics in civic education.

This report makes no effort to judge which method of presenting civics content in state standards is preferable. By putting forth civic education standards as separate documents or as explicit sections within social studies standards, 26 of the 50 states and the District of Columbia specifically highlight the importance of teaching civics. This approach also clearly communicates to social studies coordinators, teachers, parents, and students the civics topics that the state expects to be taught. On the other hand, by integrating civics content throughout standards covering other topics, states emphasize that civics is not to be relegated to one small part of students' instructional program but can be infused throughout the curriculum. The question remains, however, whether civics *will* be integrated in other courses.

States with civics topics in their standards also can be classified by whether the civics content must be taught or may be taught (i.e., whether the content is mandated or optional). A majority of states have mandatory standards, but a significant minority leave the decision to the district, school, or teacher. Table 2.5 shows how many states mandate district implementation of standards and how many states leave this decision to the district.

Table 2.5
District Requirements for Implementation of Standards

Implementation of Standards by School Districts	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Mandated	61	27	AL, AR, CA, CO, DC, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, KS, KY, LA, ME, MN, MO, NC, NM, OK, OR, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WV
Optional	39	17	AK, CT, DE, IN, MA, MD, MI, MS,[1] ND, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, SC, VT, WI

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Notes: The number of states in this table adds up to only 44 because seven states—Arizona, Iowa, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wyoming—currently do not have standards that cover topics in civic education.
[1] Mississippi has some elements of its standards that are mandated.

One important issue is whether optional standards are as effective as mandated standards in fostering civic education within school districts and schools. Some states provide local districts with information about state standards and their civics content but let the districts make final curriculum decisions; other states specifically tell districts exactly what their teachers will teach. It is significant, as is shown later in the chapter, that of the 18 states reporting that standards are not mandated, 9 currently administer statewide assessments that include civic education topics, while 4 more plan to implement new assessments soon. Consequently, even though districts in these 13 states are not required to adopt the state standards as their own, the students in these states' districts still take tests based on the subjects outlined in those standards. Presumably, then, districts have an incentive to teach the civics topics in the standards.

Policies Regarding a Government Course Requirement

As table 2.4 shows, less than one-half (22) of all states require that students complete even one course in government before graduation.

Table 2.6
State Government Course Requirements

High School Civics/Government Course Specifically Required by State	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Yes *(States requiring course as 12th grade "capstone" course are listed in italics)*	57 *(10)*	29 *(5)*	AR, CO, DC, FL, GA, HI, IA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MD, MI, MO, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, RI, SD, TN, TX, WI *AL, AZ, CA, ID, NY*
No	43	22	AK, CT, DE, KY, MA, ME, MN, MT, MS, ND, NE, NJ, OK, OR, PA, SC, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.

Many states do not prescribe any specific course requirements, leaving these kinds of decisions in local hands. Some states may mandate the adoption of standards containing civics topics, even if they do not specifically require students to take a government course in high school. Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia are all states that do not specifically require government courses in high school but do mandate standards that contain civics topics. Nevertheless, the fact that nearly half of all states do not even require a high school government course confirms states' inadequate attention to instruction in civics and government.

Table 2.6 shows that, currently, only 5 of the 29 states that require students to take a high school government course require a senior year "capstone" government course; these states are Alabama, Arizona, California, Idaho, and New York. It should be noted, however, that students in some states, including Texas, traditionally take a government course in their last year of high school even though the states may not require a "capstone" government course. Introducing a "capstone" course, or course for high school seniors, in civics has been recommended as a desirable state policy.[71] Advocates believe that a "capstone" civics course would be an effective way to bring together all 12-plus years of primary and secondary education into a coherent whole in order to prepare students to be informed and effective adult citizens.

Policies Regarding Assessment

Statewide assessments of civics topics have become more common in recent years. In particular, states have devised and implemented a variety of written tests to gauge levels of civic knowledge and skills. No state reported using any other kind of standardized statewide instrument, such as a portfolio, to assess civic education. Thus, when discussing civics topics in this section, the terms *assessment* and *test* are used interchangeably.

Thirty-one states currently test civics topics. As table 2.7 shows, only three states—Missouri, Ohio, and Utah—reported having a separate test specifically on civics topics. In Missouri, as described above, students are required to pass a test on both the Missouri and United States Constitutions in order to graduate from high school. The most popular method for testing civics topics is to include them in another test, usually a social studies test, but sometimes a history test or another test.

Examples of the "other" tests within which states cover civics topics are

1. tests that are similar to a social studies or history test but do not fit in either of these categories (e.g., New York has a U.S. History and Government test and a World History test);

2. tests that are general assessments of a wide variety of topics, including civics (e.g., Connecticut has a Connecticut Academic Performance Test; Idaho, a general test for high school students; Illinois, an Illinois Standard Achievement Test; South Dakota, a general test for all students; and Tennessee, a Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Test); and

3. standard achievement tests (e.g., California and Alabama currently use the Stanford-Nine Test; Idaho uses the Iowa Test of Basic Skills for primary students; and in Montana, local schools must choose between the Stanford-Nine Test, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and a test published by Harcourt Brace called the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills).

The growing use of tests containing civics topics is also evident by the 13 states that expect to institute new tests of civics topics soon. Two of these states already have such tests but are planning to institute new assessments. Alabama is planning to adopt a test tied to the social studies standards it introduced in 1998, while Missouri plans to add a social studies test at grades 4, 8, and 11 to its current graduation test on the United States and Missouri Constitutions. Eleven other states, including the District of Columbia, are planning to initiate tests covering civics topics. Thus, overall, 41 states and the District of Columbia either have statewide tests covering civics topics or have plans to devise and implement such tests.

Only nine states—Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Indiana, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island—reported that they neither test civics topics statewide nor plan to test them in the near future. Five of these nine states—Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, and North Dakota—have adopted standards that address civics topics but do not assess student knowledge of civics in a statewide assessment. (Of these five states, only Colorado and Florida report that district adoption of the state standards is mandatory; in the other three states, the choice of adoption is left to the school districts.)

Finally, of the seven states that currently do not have state standards or do not include civics content in their state standards—Arizona, Iowa, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wyoming (see table 2.4)—only Montana reports some form of testing of civics topics, although Arizona, Nevada, and Wyoming have plans to implement testing of civics topics at some point in the future.

Table 2.7
Existence and Arrangement of Testing of Civics Topics

Testing of Civics Topics	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Some form of test of civics topics:	*61*	*31*	
• With a separate, stand-alone civics test	6	3	MO,[1] OH, UT
• Within a social studies test	33	17	DE, GA, HI, KY, LA, ME, NC, NH, NM, OK, OR, SC, TX, VA, VT, WI, WV
• Within a history test	2	1	MS
• Within some other test	20	10	AL,[2] CA,[3] CT, ID, IL, MA, MT, NY, SD, TN
New test expected soon	*25*	*13*	AL,[2] AR, DC, KS, MD,[4] MI,[5] MN, MO,[1] NE, NJ, NV, WA, WY
Civics topics not tested, and state has no plans to do so	*18*	*9*	AK, AZ, CO,[6] FL, IA, IN, ND, PA, RI

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Notes: The number of states (and the District of Columbia) does not add up to 51, and percentages do not add up to 100 percent, because two states, Alabama and Missouri, report that they both currently are administering tests and have plans to create new tests (see notes below).

[1] Missouri requires that students pass a locally designed test on the Missouri and United States Constitutions to qualify for graduation. Also, administration of a social studies test at grades 4, 8, and 11 will begin in April 2000.

[2] Alabama currently uses the Stanford Achievement Test, or Stanford-Nine Test, for comparison with other states, but it will begin in 1999 to implement an assessment tied to its new state social studies standards.

[3] California also offers the Golden State Examination in Civics/Government, which is a voluntary test to receive an honors designation on the diploma. The test included in the table is the Stanford Achievement Test, or Stanford-Nine Test.

[4] Maryland until 1998 had a test of citizenship, but the state has since moved away from it.

[5] Michigan will test civics topics using a social studies test.

[6] Colorado does not have a state-level assessment of civics topics (although it does test reading, writing, math, and science), but it reports that district-level assessments in history are being designed.

Interestingly, Alaska and Colorado are two of the three states that have a stand-alone, separate civics standards document, yet neither tests civics topics on a statewide basis (see table 2.4). The third state with separate civics standards, namely, Vermont, reports using a social studies test to assess civics topics. On the other hand (see table 2.4), of the three states reporting separate civics tests, only Ohio covers civics topics with an explicit section of its social studies standards; Missouri and Utah both integrate civics topics throughout their social studies standards.

As table 2.8 shows, however, the widespread use of civics assessments seems somewhat less impressive when one notes that most of these tests do not carry "high-stakes" consequences. Only one state, Wisconsin, reported that it currently makes student promotion conditional upon passing the test that includes civics. Wyoming reported that it will do so once it implements its assessment test. Only 15 states reported that they require students to pass a test including civics topics to qualify for graduation from high school or will require this once their planned assessments are implemented. The ten states that currently have this requirement are Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin; Alabama, Minnesota, Maryland, New Jersey, and Wyoming report that once their new assessments are implemented, graduation will be conditional upon successful performance on the state's assessment.

Table 2.8
Student Consequences of Unsatisfactory Performance on Civics Test

Student Failure on Test of Civics Topics Prevents Promotion and/or Graduation	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Yes	*29*	*15*	
• Prevents promotion only	0	0	
• Prevents promotion and graduation	4	2	WI,[1] WY[2]
• Prevents graduation only	25	13	AL,[3] DE, GA, HI, MA, MD,[2] MN,[2] MO,[4] NJ,[2] NY, OH, SC, VA
No	*39*	*20*	CA, CT, ID, IL, KY, LA, ME, MS, MT, NC, NH, NM, OK, OR, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, WV
Not applicable	*31*	*16*	AK, AR, AZ, CO, DC, FL, IA, IN, KS, MI, ND, NE, NV, PA, RI, WA

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Notes: For "Not applicable," state does not have an assessment and does not report how any future assessment might look.

[1] Promotion and graduation provisions must be phased in no later than 2002.

[2] Test has yet to be implemented, but survey responses indicate that test will prevent promotion or graduation.

[3] Only the planned test aligned with its new social studies standards will prevent graduation; the current test is for evaluation purposes only.

[4] Only the current test on U.S. and Missouri Constitutions prevents graduation; for future tests, student consequences will be left to local districts.

States that do not base promotion or graduation on passage of a test of civics topics use the results of the test for other purposes. For example, Oklahoma requires remediation courses for students who fail the test. Connecticut, Illinois, and Michigan indicate passage or failure of the test on student transcripts. California and Ohio use test results as a criterion for honors diplomas.

Schools and districts also face significant consequences for their students' performance on statewide assessments. Notably, only four of those states that reported administering some kind of test of civics topics, namely, Alabama, Louisiana, New Hampshire, and Virginia, responded that they do not publicly report the aggregate scores of schools and districts. Overall, 26 states responded that they currently require public reporting of assessment scores at either the school or the district level. An additional six states indicated that they plan to report scores on tests of civics topics once these tests are implemented.

Seven states—Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, New Mexico, and Tennessee—report applying sanctions on schools and districts for poor student performance on the tests. The same number of states, seven, offer rewards to schools and districts based on assessment performance, although Kentucky and South Carolina replace Tennessee and North Carolina in this list. Two states, Connecticut and Kentucky, reported offering special assistance to schools or districts that do poorly, while Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming specifically noted that they require testing success in determining school accreditation.

Only Louisiana and New Hampshire report no statewide system of consequences or reporting, either for students or schools and districts, based on student tests covering civics topics.

Increasingly, states are using statewide programs of assessment to gauge the level of student attainment of civic education goals. Only a few of these states have assessments that treat civics as a distinct subject equal in importance to other topic areas such as reading and mathematics, however; most states assess civics topics through tests that broadly cover social studies subject matter.

Interestingly, as evidenced by a comparison between the list of states with stand-alone civics standards (Alaska, Colorado, and Vermont) and the list of states with a stand-alone civics assessment (Missouri, Ohio, and Utah), statewide assessments of civics topics are not always aligned with state civic standards.

Policies Regarding Teacher Certification

One of the greatest influences on student learning is the teacher. An important way that states attempt to ensure that their teachers are prepared to teach is by requiring certification in the subject(s) the teacher plans to teach. Table 2.9 shows the certifications necessary to teach civics in junior high/middle school and high school around the country. Only junior high/middle school and high school are considered because these are the levels at which teachers usually specialize, while many elementary school teachers are generalists, teaching all (or most) of the subjects at a single grade level.

Only a few states reported that they offer a specific certification in civics for teachers. Quite a few more states offer certification in government. By far the largest category of certification is a broad history and social studies certification. More than two-thirds of the states offer what serves as the general certification for social studies teachers. Many states also offer more than one category of certification. A few states—Alaska, Iowa, Massachusetts and Michigan—reported that they offer a general teaching certification for high school teachers (i.e., a certification not limited to specific subject areas). Thus, a vast majority of states, even at the high school level, reported that they make little distinction between teachers of history, economics, and civics in their certification process.

Table 2.9
State Certification Requirements to Teach Civics Topics

	Civics		Government		Various History/ Social Studies		Other		General Teaching Certification	
State	**JH/MS**	**HS**	**JH/MS**	**HS**	**JH/MS**	**HS**	**JH/MS**	**HS**	**JH/MS**	**HS**
Alaska									X	X
Alabama					X	X				
Arkansas					X	X	X			
Arizona					X	X			X	
California					X	X				
Colorado					X	X				
Connecticut					X	X				
District of Columbia					X	X				
Delaware					X	X				
Florida					X	X				
Georgia					X	X				
Hawaii	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Iowa									X	X
Idaho					X	X				
Illinois		X			X					
Indiana					X	X				
Kansas			X	X	X	X				
Kentucky					X	X				
Louisiana					X	X				
Massachusetts					X	X			X	X
Maryland			X	X	X	X				
Maine	X	X	X	X						
Michigan									X	X
Minnesota			X	X						
Missouri					X	X				
Mississippi					X	X				
Montana			X	X	X	X				
North Carolina					X	X				
North Dakota		X		X		X			X	

State	Civics		Government		Various History/ Social Studies		Other		General Teaching Certification	
	JH/MS	HS	JH/MS	HS	JH/MS	HS	JH/MS	HS	JH/MS	HS
Nebraska					X	X				
New Hampshire					X	X				
New Jersey					X	X				
New Mexico					X	X				
Nevada					X	X				
New York					X	X				
Ohio					X	X				
Oklahoma				X	X					
Oregon					X	X			X	
Pennsylvania					X	X				
Rhode Island					X	X				
South Carolina			X	X	X	X				
South Dakota			X	X					X	
Tennessee			X	X	X	X				
Texas			X	X	X	X				
Utah					X	X				
Virginia					X	X				
Vermont										
Washington						X			X	
Wisconsin						X			X	
West Virginia					X	X				
Wyoming					X	X				

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Note: "JH/MS" is a category that includes the middle years of instruction between elementary and high school. Some states define this as including sixth grade; some do not. However states define their particular situations, their definitions are used here. An "X" in multiple categories implies that multiple endorsements are available.

At the junior high/middle school level, the situation is even more striking. Ten states offer general teaching certifications to teachers of these grade levels. Illinois and Oklahoma offer civics and government certifications, respectively, at the high school level, but for junior high/middle school teachers, the required certification moves to a more broad history and social studies certification.

Fewer than one-half of the states (23) reported they require teachers to pass any sort of standardized test of their civics knowledge before being certified to teach civics content. Of these states, eight—Connecticut, Indiana, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina—reported specifically that they use the "Praxis Subject Test in Social Studies" developed by the Educational Testing Service. The same number of states (23) reported requiring completion of specific courses in civics topics in college in order to obtain a certification to teach civics topics. Only 18 states reported that they require teachers to major in a related field if they intend to teach civics. These states are Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Maine, Montana, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and the District of Columbia.

As table 2.10 shows, only a minority of states (21) reported that they require some professional development by teachers of civics and related topics. A slightly higher number (27) noted that they offer opportunities for teachers to take university courses to refresh their knowledge of the subject. Approximately one-half (25) of all states also reported that they offer state-level in-service programs and conferences to aid in the professional development of teachers of civics-related topics. Only 16 states reported that educators of civics can obtain training through community organizations (e.g., law-related education associations).

Table 2.10
Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers of Civics Topics

Opportunities for Teachers of Civics Topics to Continue Their Training	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Required professional development	41	21	AZ, CA, CT, DC, GA, IA, IN, LA, MI, MN, MO, MT, NE, NH, NV, OH, RI, SD, TN, UT, WV
University courses	53	27	AK, CA, DE, FL, HI, IA, ID, KS, LA, MD, MI, MN, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NM, NV, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, TN, WI, WV
State in-service programs	49	25	AK, CA, CT, DE, FL, HI, IA, ID, KS, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, NC, ND, NH, NM, NY, OH, OR, PA, TN, UT, WI
State conferences	47	24	AK, CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IA, IL, KS, LA, MD, MI, MN, MT, NC, ND, NH, NM, NY, OH, OR, PA, TN, WI,
Training through community organizations	31	18	CA, CT, FL, HI, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, MT, NC, ND, NH, NM, NY, OR, SC, TN

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Note: The number of states (including the District of Columbia) does not add up to 51, and percentages do not add up to 100 percent, because these categories are not mutually exclusive; i.e., inclusion under one category does not prohibit inclusion under another one.

Taken together, the information in tables 2.9 and 2.10 suggests that the emphasis among states on civics in their certification requirements and professional development opportunities for teachers could be strengthened. While about one-half of all states reported that their state standards for instruction explicitly highlight civic education topics, either in a separate standards document or as a separate section in the social studies standards, a large majority of states do not appear to emphasize civics-specific teacher certification and professional development policies. Moreover, only about two-fifths of all states reported that they require teachers to update their knowledge in civics topics in order to maintain their certification.

Other Policies

Civic education is not limited to traditional classroom instruction—the type of instruction most influenced by state standards, assessments, and teacher training. Many states have created other policies and programs to help promote their civic education goals.

One state policy that can foster students' civic dispositions, skills, and knowledge is to require or encourage community service (sometimes referred to as service learning, although the terms have somewhat different meanings) among students, especially high school students (see table 2.11). Vermont, Maryland, and the District of Columbia all reported having a formal community service requirement for students. For example, Maryland includes student service learning as a requirement for high school graduation. In the District of Columbia, high school students are required to complete 100 hours of community service. Vermont, one of the three states that single out civics topics in a separate standards document, includes its community service requirement in its standards: "Students take an active role in their community. This is evident when students (a) Plan, implement, and reflect on activities that respond to community needs; and (b) Use academic skills and knowledge in real-life community situations."[72]

Table 2.11
States Reporting a Statewide Community Service Program

Existence of Statewide Community Service Policy Requirement	Percentage of States	Number of States	States
Yes	6	3	DC, MD, VT
No, but statewide voluntary program	16	8	AR, CO, CT, HI, IN, MO, OH, SC

Source: LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.
Note: The other 40 states not listed here did not report either a mandated or a voluntary statewide community service program.

Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio, and South Carolina all reported that they have set up programs that formally encourage service learning, even if they do not have actual community service requirements. Arkansas and Connecticut, for instance, allow schools to give high school course credit for a specified amount of verified community service. Ohio, in its voluntary service learning statute, mandates that any school that gives course credit for community service must also require students to spend half of their time in the classroom studying the history, theory, and practice of voluntarism and community service. Nevertheless, a vast majority of states have yet to adopt state policies that foster community service.

All 11 states that reported having some sort of statewide community service program in their schools either have adopted standards with civics topics included or have a draft that is moving toward adoption; in fact, of the 11, only South Carolina falls into the latter category. Of the three states currently requiring community service, only Vermont administers a test covering civics topics; performance on that test does not affect student promotion or graduation, however. The District of Columbia and Maryland are not currently testing civics topics but plan to do so in the future. (See tables 2.7 and 2.8.) In addition, Arkansas reports that it does not yet have a statewide test of civics topics, but it plans to implement one soon. Only Colorado and Indiana neither currently test civics topics on a statewide basis nor have plans to implement such a test.

Other state policies and programs related to civics exist as well. Several states reported that they have statewide mock government programs and mock trial competitions. For instance, Florida, Kentucky, and Missouri all highlighted their statewide mock trial competitions. Alabama has established the Alabama Compact for Leadership and Citizenship Education to promote civic education through public-private partnerships.

Resources for such policies and practices appear to be a problem, however. Only Wisconsin, Ohio, Texas, and California reported that their states' budgets specifically earmarked funding for civic education activities. Ohio and Texas respondents each noted that their state budgets set aside funds for the state's law-related education program. Wisconsin has a program similar to Alabama's to support civic education, namely the Wisconsin Citizenship Initiative; the 1999-2001 Education Agency/Budget Initiative set aside funds for civic education. In 1998, the California Assembly earmarked $180,000 for the purpose of developing middle school civic education curricula.

This list of "other" programs and policies is by no means comprehensive—there undoubtedly are many other programs and policies in other states. These programs can be significant supplements to classroom teaching. In civic education, where participation and dispositions are valued more than in many traditional academic fields, commitment to participatory, co-curricular activities can be an important sign of a state's enthusiasm for civics.

Conclusions

States use a variety of methods to enhance students' civic dispositions, intellectual skills, and knowledge. Through constitutional provisions, statutes, standards, and other policies, such as specific course requirements, states have declared that they have created and continue to sustain their public education systems in order to create a more informed and effective citizenry.

Despite the diversity of initiatives among all states, civic education's place in states' K-12 education systems is not as evident and significant as it should be. Even when states have included civics content in their state standards, they often have not yet created the range of state policies necessary to ensure that the civics content of the standards shapes district and school civic education policies and practices. States need appropriate assessments that promote civic education; states need to ensure that their teacher certification and professional development policies encourage qualified people to teach civic education and to improve their professional skills; and states need to ensure that their related policies and programs, including service learning, make civics a vibrant part of every school day, not just a checklist of topics to be covered in the classroom.

This chapter provides an overview of the constitutional, statutory, and administrative provisions enacted by states to foster and promote civic education in kindergarten through grade 12. The chapters that follow explore in greater depth the content and implementation of one of the most critically important types of state policies, namely, standards.

Notes

[1] *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 493 (1954).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Indiana Constitution, art. VIII, sec. 1.

[4] Maine Constitution, art. VIII, pt. 1, sec. 1.

[5] Arkansas Constitution, art. XIV, sec. 1; Idaho Constitution, art. IX, sec. 1; Minnesota Constitution, art XIII, sec. 1; Missouri Constitution, art. IX, sec. 1(a); Montana Constitution, art. X, sec. 1; North Carolina Constitution, art. IX, sec. 1; North Dakota Constitution, art. VIII, sec. 1; Texas Constitution, art. VII, sec. 1.

[6] California Constitution, art. IX, sec. 1 (emphasis added).

[7] Indiana Constitution, art. VIII, sec. 1.

[8] New Hampshire Constitution, pt. 2, art. 83.

[9] Massachusetts Constitution, pt. 2, ch. 5, sec. 2.

[10] Iowa Statutes, sec. 256.11.

[11] Indiana Statutes, sec. 20-10.1-4-(1-5).

[12] Louisiana Statutes, ch. 17, secs. 261-279.

[13] Oregon Statutes, sec. 329.015.

[14] Oregon Statutes, sec. 329.045.

[15] West Virginia Statutes, sec. 18-2-9(a) (emphasis added).

[16] Idaho Statutes, sec. 33-1602.

[17] Ibid., sec. 33-1612.

[18] Florida Statutes, sec. 233.061(2).

[19] Ibid., sec. 233.0612.

[20] Ibid., sec. 233.061(2).

[21] California Education Code, sec. 233.5(a).

[22] Connecticut Statutes, sec. 10-16b(a).

[23] Ibid., sec. 10-18.

[24] Washington Statutes, sec. 28A.230.170.

[25] Ibid., sec. 28A.150.210.

[26] New York Education Code, sec. 801.

[27] Texas Statutes, sec. 28.002.

[28] Virginia Statutes, sec. 22.1-253.13:1(C).

[29] Rhode Island Statutes, sec. 16-22-2.

[30] Massachusetts Statutes, Ch. 71, sec. 2.

[31] Illinois Statutes, ch. 105, sec. 5/27-3 (emphasis added).

[32] Oregon Statutes, sec. 329.025.

[33] Ibid., sec. 329.485.

[34] Ibid., sec. 329.025.

[35] Maine Statutes, sec. 20-A.6209.

[36] Ibid., sec. 4706(1), (2), sec. 4722(2)(D).

[37] Wyoming Statutes, sec. 21-9-101(b), (b)(i)(N).

[38] Ibid., sec. 21-9-102.

[39] New Hampshire Statutes, sec. 189:11.

[40] Michigan Statutes, sec. 380.1166(1).

[41] Ibid., sec. 380.1166(6).

[42] Louisiana Statutes, ch. 17, sec. 274.1.

[43] Ibid., secs. 268(A), 261, 268(B).

[44] Iowa Statutes, sec. 256.11(5).

[45] Ibid., sec. 256.11(3), (4).

[46] Ohio Statutes, sec. 3313.60(C)

[47] Ibid., sec. 3313.603(B)(6)(a), (b).

[48] Kansas Statutes, sec. 72-1103 (emphasis added).

[49] Ibid., sec. 72-1117.

[50] Alabama Statutes, sec. 16-6B-2(b)(4).

[51] Wisconsin Statutes, sec. 118.33(1)(a)(1).

[52] Ibid., sec. 118.01(2)(c).

[53] Indiana Statutes, sec. 20-10.1-4-2.

[54] Missouri Statutes, sec. 170.011(1).

[55] Georgia Statutes, secs. 20-2-142(a)(1)(A), (B).

[56] Missouri Statutes, sec. 170.011(2).

[57] Arkansas Statutes, sec. 6-16-128.

[58] .Ibid., sec. 6-16-123.

[59] Ibid., sec. 6-16-120.

[60] Ibid., sec. 6-16-24.

[61] LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.

[62] Ohio Statutes, sec. 3313.605.

[63] Iowa Statutes, sec. 280.9A(2).

[64] New York Education Code, sec. 801(4).

[65] Georgia Statutes, sec. 20-2-145.

[66] Alabama Statutes, sec. 16-44A.

[67] Ibid., sec. 16-6B-2(h).

[68] Nebraska Statutes, sec. 79-724.

[69] Interview by Elizabeth Witt with John LeFeber, Director of Social Science Education, Nebraska Department of Education, Lincoln, Neb., November 11, 1998.

[70] LBJ School Survey of State Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999.

[71] See, for example, Charles N. Quigley, "Education for Democracy," *The New Democrat: Blueprint, Ideas for a New Century*, vol. 5 (Spring 1999), pp. 27-31.

[72] Vermont Department of Education, *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities* (Montpelier, Vt., 1996), p. 4.1.

Chapter 3. Promoting Civic Dispositions in State Standards

Civic education, as outlined in chapter 1 of this report, is comprised of three fundamental, interrelated components: civic dispositions, civic intellectual and participatory skills, and civic knowledge.

Civic dispositions are

> traits of private and public character essential to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy.... [They] develop slowly over time as a result of what one learns and experiences in the home, school, community, and organizations of civil society. From those experiences should come the understanding that American constitutional democracy requires the responsible self-governance of each individual; one cannot exist without the other. Traits of private character such as moral responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for individual worth and human dignity are essential to the well-being of the American nation, society, and constitutional democracy. Moreover, American constitutional democracy cannot accomplish its purposes unless its citizens are inclined to participate thoughtfully in public affairs and civic life. Traits of public character, such as public spiritedness, civility, respect for law, critical mindedness, and a willingness to listen, negotiate, and compromise, are indispensable for the nation's well-being.[1]

Civic dispositions, then, can be summarized as "those attitudes and habits of mind of the citizen that are conducive to the healthy functioning and common good of the democratic system."[2]

Civic dispositions do not develop only in school or only in one year. They cannot be compelled; the internal development of such "attitudes and habits of mind" must be voluntary. Moreover, developing these dispositions involves more than the acquisition of knowledge, and more than a command of skills to apply one's knowledge. The development of civic dispositions requires the growth of a willingness and a desire to call upon that knowledge already acquired and those skills already honed.

Nevertheless, schools have an important responsibility in helping to foster the growth of students' civic dispositions:

> Whatever one's view of the present-day bearing of home, church, and community on fostering [civic dispositions], it is evident that the school must play a significant role in providing an environment conducive to developing these virtues.[3]

When schools treat civics as a high priority, they create an environment that nurtures and promotes the development of civic dispositions in students. When the importance of civic education is neglected, students are less likely to come to a reasoned understanding of and a voluntary commitment to the values and principles of American constitutional democracy.

As described in chapter 2, states shape school priorities and practices through their policies. More and more states are using state standards as their most fundamental statements of school expectations. States themselves treat their standards as referential declarations of state priorities. Realizing the important role of state standards, many states have prefaced their standards for student achievement with introductory statements of purpose that summarize the intentions and rationale underlying the standards. These introductory statements are states' first and best opportunity to highlight and frame state education priorities.

States also face choices in the formats they use to organize their standards. They can emphasize particular topics over others by using organizational formats that highlight the courses, subjects, or themes valued by the state. Conversely, states can diminish the importance given to certain courses, subjects, and themes by making the standards more difficult for educators and parents to access.

Thus, standards' introductory statements of purpose and organizational formats can set the context in which standards' civics statements are viewed. They can promote a school environment in which teachers emphasize the civic dispositions so important in students' lives as citizens, or they can promote a school environment in which civic dispositions are ignored.

To assess state standards' promotion of civic dispositions, this chapter examines two questions:

1. In what ways do the standards' introductory statements of purpose highlight the importance of civic education?

2. In what ways do the standards' organizational formats highlight civics content and make it more accessible?

Framework for Analysis and Methodology

Project researchers initially obtained all current and useful state standards that address civics topics from the World Wide Web; almost all state departments of education have established sophisticated and attractive Web sites containing a wealth of information. Researchers also requested these standards by phone from all state departments of education. Usually the Web standards and the standards received from the state departments of education matched. Occasionally, however, the Web document was outdated, incomplete, or in a less useful format. Researchers always used the most current and complete version of the standards available.

In addressing the two questions above, project researchers reviewed standards from 43 states. (The other seven states—Arizona, Iowa, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Wyoming—either do not have standards dealing with civics topics or are in the process of extensive revision of current standards and provided the project with no documents for assessment.) (Appendix C lists the names of the state standards reviewed, plus the sections examined by project researchers for civics content. See Appendix D for summary descriptions of the state social studies standards that were reviewed, including brief comments on the standards' introductory statements of purpose, organizational formats, and accessibility.)

Promoting Civic Dispositions through Standards' Introductory Statements of Purpose

In the introductory statements to their state standards, several states have made a major effort to promote civic dispositions by stressing the importance of civic education in their schools. These states use significant language in their statements of purpose extolling the positive influence that an informed and effective citizen has on society. A few states list civics as a goal or objective that should be addressed in all social studies courses. Other states include only a sentence or two about civic education or citizenship in the introductions to their standards. Table 3.1 indicates which of the 43 states' standards have no introductory statements of purpose (2), have introductory statements of purpose in which there are no significant references to civics (9), and have introductory statements of purpose in which there are significant references to civics in addition to standard prefatory remarks (32).

Table 3.1
Civics Language in State Standards' Introductory Statements of Purpose

Significant Civics Language Included in Standards' Introductory Statements of Purpose	Number of States	States
Yes	32	AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, GA, ID, IN, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MS, MO, NE, NH, NJ, NC, OH, OK, OR, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WV, WI
No	9	AK, FL, IL, KS, KY, NM, NY, ND, VT
No introductory statements of purpose	2	HI, MN
No relevant standards	7	AZ, IA, MT, NV, PA, RI, WY

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

Illustrating the way in which students' civic dispositions are fostered, many state standards have statements of purpose proclaiming that the mission of the public school system is to educate informed and active citizens. For example, in the introduction to its social studies standards, West Virginia states, "Social studies at all levels integrate the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence and participation.... Students in K-12 will develop competencies essential for informed, responsible, civic behavior.... Students must learn and practice intellectual and participation skills essential for an involved citizenry."[4]

Colorado emphasizes the importance of civic education in its introduction by noting that "[p]ublic education in the United States of America has a civic purpose: to prepare informed and participative citizens committed to the preservation of the constitutional republic of the United States."[5] In fact, Colorado affirms the importance of civic education for the continuation of our democracy: "It is through systematic instruction in civics and government that young people develop and apply the intellectual and participatory skills that result in understanding what government of the people, by the people, and for the people really means."[6]

The first sentence of the introduction to Michigan's social studies standards states, "Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences to prepare young people to become responsible citizens."[7] Much of the language in this introduction emphasizes the importance of fostering civic dispositions through active student involvement in civic matters; for example, the introduction states that "[s]tudents are encouraged to inform themselves about public affairs and to become active participants in civic life rather than passive bystanders."[8] The introduction continues by reaffirming the importance of civic education: "Social studies education for responsible citizenship is a compelling priority if we expect to sustain our constitutional democracy."[9]

Another common element in standards' introductory statements is a list of goals or objectives that the states expect the teaching of all subjects to accomplish. These are broad themes that go beyond the specific statements comprising the rest of the document. For example, Utah's standards begin with seven requirements for student achievement. Of these, two highlight civic dispositions. The first states that students will "[r]ecognize and apply democratic and constitutional principles, including freedom, equality, justice, and responsibility, to individual and community."[10] The second statement highlighting civic dispositions calls for students to "[p]articipate in activities which serve others and promote the public good."[11]

In its standards' introduction, Tennessee identifies four broad goals for social studies, two of which highlight civic dispositions. One states, "The student will be a responsible, contributing, informed member of the family, local community, the nation, and the world."[12] Another broad goal is "The student will understand his/her rights and responsibilities as a citizen in a democratic society."[13]

One of the three goals for social studies instruction in the introduction to the Ohio standards is to "enable learners to work with others, make informed judgments and decisions, and act in accordance with democratic processes and principles."[14]

Indiana, in the introductory statements to its standards, develops the idea of civic dispositions with an elaborate chart highlighting the key components of civic participation and values. The components, with their emphasis on civic dispositions, are designed to teach students to

1. "actively seek and acquire information,"

2. "interpret and apply information,"

3. "understand the importance of values and beliefs," and

4. "participate responsibly as citizens in a democracy."[15]

The language in the introduction to North Carolina's standards is particularly noteworthy: "Social studies programs have as a major purpose the promotion of civic competence—which is the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes required of students to be able to assume 'the office of citizen' ... in our democratic republic."[16] As North Carolina's introduction goes on to say, "There must exist an essential educational ingredient that encompasses civic education, a body of knowledge that is addressed in social studies. Although many other institutions, forces, and experience do educate, the only place where this knowledge will be taught to everyone is in the public schools."[17] In addition, the state identifies four skills that should be developed in all social studies classes. One of the four skills is the promotion of civic participation. In giving such strong voice to the importance of civic education in the introductory statements of purpose, North Carolina's standards promote an environment in which the development of civic dispositions is much more likely.

Virginia is another state that emphasizes the importance of civic education in its standards' introductory statements of purpose. In the introduction, five goals are given for the social studies standards. Two highlight the importance of civic dispositions. The first says that the standards of learning are designed to "enable students to understand the basic values, principles, and operation of American constitutional democracy."[18] The second states that the standards are designed to "prepare students for informed and responsible citizenship."[19] These goals are followed by an explanation of the importance of social studies. In civics, "[students] should be aware of their rights; be willing to fulfill their responsibilities; be able to obtain, understand, and evaluate information relating to the performance of public officials; and be willing to hold these officials accountable."[20]

As a final example, civic dispositions are laced throughout the introduction of the Alabama social studies standards. As noted therein, "[t]he overall social studies goal of civic responsibilities requires the development of competent citizens committed to the fundamental constitutional values and principles."[21] In order to achieve this standard, the social studies curriculum is divided: "Alabama's K-12 Social Studies curriculum encompasses four program goals that lead toward civic responsibility: historic literacy, geographic literacy, economic literacy, and political literacy."[22]

Promoting Civic Dispositions through Organizational Formats of State Standards

Of the 43 states whose standards containing civics topics were reviewed, 40 use some grade designations to organize their standards, as shown in table 3.2. Of these states, 28 use grade-level groupings (e.g., grades 9-12); 6 use individual grade levels (e.g., grade 8); and 6 use grade levels until high school. Three states use no grade designations: Alaska, Idaho, and Missouri. For example, the standards documents of Alaska and Missouri are notably short, consisting primarily of broad, abstract statements applying to all grade levels.

Table 3.2
Grade-Level Divisions in State Social Studies Standards

Grade-Level Divisions	Number of States	States
By grade-level groupings	28	AK, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IL, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OK, OR, TN, VT, WA, WI
By individual grade levels	6	AL, CA, OH, SC, VA, WV
By individual grade levels until high school	6	IN, MS, NC, SD, TX, UT
No grade distinctions	3	AK, ID, MO
No social studies standards	7	AZ, IA, MT, NV, PA, RI, WY

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

Project researchers reviewed how states organize their standards with respect to courses (e.g., tenth-grade American History), subjects (e.g., history, government, economics), or themes (e.g., "Continuity and Change") as a way to examine the accessibility of civics content in the standards. Table 3.3 summarizes the organizational formats of social studies standards for the 43 states whose standards were reviewed.

Table 3.3
Organizational Formats of State Social Studies Standards

Organizational Formats	Number of States	States
Subject-based	24	AK, CO, CT, DE, FL, HI, ID, IL, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MO, NH, NJ, NM, NY, ND, OR, SC, VT, WA, WI
Course-based	16	AL, CA, GA, IN, KS, KY, MS, NE, NC, OK, SD, TN, TX, UT, VI, WV
Theme-based	3	AR, MN, OH
No social studies standards	7	AZ, IA, MT, NV, PA, RI, WY

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

Standards for student learning in 16 states are organized by the courses in which standards are to be met. Twenty-four states organize their standards based on traditional academic subjects (e.g., history, government, civics), but the standards do not prescribe the courses in which such subjects are to be taught. Educators in these states can refer to standards organized under multiple subjects even in the teaching of a single course. Finally, the standards in another three states are structured around broad themes that are not specifically related to civics.

The social studies standards in several states include the term "civics" or "citizenship" in the course or subject name under which civics statements are organized. These statements are particularly accessible by and useful to educators, parents, and students. Civics topics listed under such courses and subjects generally include factual knowledge about the U.S. government and its role in society, analyses of the rights and responsibilities of citizens, explorations of the foundations of democracies, and occasional references to citizen participation.

The Arkansas, Minnesota, and Ohio standards are not organized by course or subject at all; rather, these standards are organized only by theme. Arkansas and Ohio use the themes "Citizenship" and "Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities," respectively, to group explicitly those standards' statements addressing civics topics. Minnesota, conversely, does not label or group its standards' civics statements under an unambiguous theme.

Some state standards combine a format based on courses or academic subjects with a further division organized around common themes that extend across courses, subjects, and grade levels (e.g., "People and Cultures," "Inquiry"). Standards in other states highlight civics statements in any course or subject and at any grade level that foster a school environment in which students' civic dispositions are more likely to develop. For instance, West Virginia not only emphasizes civic education by organizing its standards' civics content under a course called "Civics and Government," it also explicitly groups and identifies those civics statements throughout every social studies course and grade level in the standards that address the components of civic education (i.e., civic knowledge, civic intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions).

Even states that do not group standards' civics statements under courses or subjects devoted solely to civic education sometimes have an organizing theme running across courses, subjects, or grade levels that highlights the civics statements. For example, Utah has two civics themes running through its social studies courses (e.g., "Life Skills").

Another approach is taken by Alabama. Though its standards are course based, they are also very specific about the minimum time that the subject of character development should be emphasized in the public school curriculum: "For all grades, not less than ten minutes instruction per day shall focus upon the students' development of the following character traits: courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect of the environment, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, and perseverance."[23] Devotion of daily class time to these traits of personal (e.g., self-respect, courage) and public (e.g., patriotism, respect for others, cooperation) character is a clear demonstration of the state's commitment to fostering students' civic dispositions.

Other states organize their standards in ways that explicitly highlight civics topics, even though the standards' introductory statements of purpose do not emphasize the importance of civic education. For example, Alaska, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, New York, and North Dakota standards all make it easy to find the standards' statements dealing with the knowledge and skills critical to informed and effective citizenship.

Table 3.4 summarizes project researchers' assessment of the accessibility of civics statements in state standards. This assessment is based on the extent to which the standards make it relatively easy or relatively hard for educators, parents, and students to find and use the civics statements in the standards by highlighting the civics content through organizational formats based on courses, subjects, or themes.

Table 3.4
Accessibility of Civics Content in State Standards

Accessibility of Civics Content in State Standards	Number of States	States
More accessible	31	AK, AL, AR, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, ME, MA, MI, MS, ND, NE, NH, NY, OH, OR, SD, TX, UT, VT, WA, WI, WV
Less accessible	12	CA, IL, MD, MN, MO, NJ, NM, NC, OK, SC, TN, VA
No social studies standards	7	AR, IA, MT, NV, PA, RI, WY

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

Conclusions

Three-fourths of the states with civics content in their social studies standards use the standards' introductory statements of purpose to highlight the importance of civic education, thereby encouraging a school environment that makes the development of students' civic dispositions more likely. Educators have greater difficulty in creating an environment that will foster civic dispositions when civics statements in state standards are difficult to find. Thus, the most helpful standards are those that are formatted in such a way that civics content is clearly labeled or otherwise identifiable.

Slightly more than one-fourth of the states with civics content in their social studies standards use an organizational format that limits accessibility to the civics content, thereby discouraging the development of students' civic dispositions. If an informed and effective citizen having the traits of private and public character essential to American constitutional democracy is the goal of a state, as it should be, state standards should reflect this goal in their organizational format. Standards in which the civics content is relatively accessible can more effectively promote attention to civic dispositions by school district and school administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest steps that could be taken to ensure that state social studies standards more effectively promote students' civic dispositions.

1. *The Center for Civic Education (CCE) and its state coordinators should work collaboratively with state legislators and other education leaders to improve the effectiveness with which civic dispositions are fostered through the language and format of state standards.* In their standards' introductory statements of purpose, many states promote the value of civic education and the importance of students' becoming informed and effective citizens, thereby affirming some of the fundamental principles and values associated with civic dispositions. Yet, most state social studies standards could be strengthened significantly in this regard. Moreover, in several states, statements addressing civics topics are almost impossible to find within the standards. While many states label a course or subject as "civics" or explicitly highlight civics topics across all courses, subjects, and grade levels, few states consistently emphasize civics topics throughout their standards, even when the standards' introductory statements of purpose may have affirmed civic education as a broad social studies goal.

2. *Education researchers and state educction policymakers should examine the relative effectiveness of course-based and theme-based formats for standards in promoting civic education among school districts, schools, and teachers and in fostering the development of students' civic dispositions.* State social studies standards organized around common themes across courses and grade levels have the opportunity to establish an academic context in which civics content is integrated throughout social studies subjects and courses. When this is done well, teachers and students can see clearly the relationships among civics concepts, principles, values, experiences, and events. On the other hand, a disadvantage of standards based on broad themes (compared to course-based standards) is that teachers must exercise greater initiative and creativity to ensure that the civics statements embedded in the theme-based standards are addressed effectively in their particular courses. Further study is required to assess the relative effectiveness of course-based and theme-based formats.

3. *Education researchers and state education policymakers should examine the relative effectiveness of specifying grade-level groupings or individual grade levels within state social studies standards in promoting civic education among school districts, schools, and teachers and in fostering the development of students' civic dispositions.* Many states use grade-level groupings (e.g., grades K-4 or 9-12) or individual grade levels in organizing their standards, then specify standards elements for each grouping or grade level. Other states (e.g., Alaska and Idaho) never mention grade levels or groupings in their academic standards. An absence of grade levels or grade-level groupings in standards may give school administrators and teachers greater flexibility in developing and implementing civics curricula and courses. Further study is needed to assess whether the absence of grade levels and grade-level groupings in standards encourages educators to give greater or lesser attention to

civic dispositions than they do when the standards are organized by grade levels or grade-level groupings.

Notes

[1] National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (Washington, D.C., 1998), pp. 31-32.

[2] Charles N. Quigley and Charles F. Bahmuller, eds., *CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education* (Calabasas, Calif.: Center for Civic Education, 1991), p. 11.

[3] Quigley and Bahmuller, *CIVITAS*, p. 14.

[4] West Virginia Department of Education, *Instructional Goals and Objectives for West Virginia Schools: Social Studies* (Charleston, W. Va., 1998), p. i.

[5] Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Civics* (Denver, Colo., 1998), n.p.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Michigan State Board of Education, *Social Studies: Vision Statement and Content Standards and Benchmarks* (Lansing, Mich., 1996), p. 1.

[8] Ibid., p. 2.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Utah State Board of Education, *Social Studies Core Curriculum: Grades 7-12* (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1996), n.p.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Tennessee Board of Education, *K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Frameworks* (Nashville, Tenn., 1996), n.p.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ohio Department of Education, *Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program* (Columbus, Ohio, 1994), p. 9.

[15] Indiana Department of Education, *The Social Studies Proficiency Guide: An Aid to Curriculum Development* (Indianapolis, Ind., 1996), p. 4.

[16] North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *North Carolina Standard Course of Study and Grade Level Competencies: Social Studies, K-12* (Raleigh, N.C., 1997), p. 1.

[17] Ibid., p. 4.

[18] Virginia Board of Education, *History and Social Studies Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* (Richmond, Va., 1995), p. 1.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Alabama State Department of Education, *Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies* (Montgomery, Ala., 1998), p. 1.

[22] Ibid., p. 3.

[23] Ibid., p. 150.

Chapter 4. Promoting Civic Intellectual Skills in State Standards

Educating the nation's students to think critically is essential to creating an informed and effective citizenry. One goal of the K-12 education system, then, is to give students the opportunity and encouragement to foster higher-order thinking skills. As Barry Beyer (George Mason University) explains:

> Engaging in learning activities … involves more than simply trying to memorize what someone or some text presents or what was presented or asserted yesterday and last week. Producing knowledge requires sustained application of and engagement in *higher-order thinking*—application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation—as well as in *lower-order thinking* such as recall and translation.[1]

If students are to learn and retain the elements of civics curricula and then internalize this information in a meaningful manner, adds Beyer, they must learn to think critically in and out of school, with the guidance of teachers through classroom lessons and community experiences:

> Interestingly, applying higher-order thinking to process prior knowledge, given information, and experience into new forms enables students not only to produce new understanding but also remember the information used to generate new insights. Higher-order thinking also helps students make sense of unfamiliar information encountered later.… [T]hese actions evidence deep understanding of a topic, subject, or idea. Thoughtful classrooms are *not* settings where lessons are heard or information is simply committed to memory. They are settings where knowledge, meaning, and understanding are constructed.[2]

Development of higher-order thinking skills is important. State education policymakers who create state standards and related policy requirements need to emphasize and highlight these skills at the foundation of the curriculum—that is, within state standards—to ensure that classroom teachers give them the attention students deserve.

Ensuring that state standards promote students' use and application of higher-order thinking skills is closely related to ensuring that standards promote students' informed citizenship through development of their civic intellectual skills. Thus, examining the extent to which the language in state social studies standards gives attention to higher-order thinking skills provides a means to assess the standards' promotion of civic intellectual skills. Students' engagement in higher-order thinking also promotes participation in those community contexts (including school and home) in which youth spend much of their lives.

This chapter examines the intellectual skills component of civic education, complementing chapter 3 (civic dispositions component) and chapter 5 (civic knowledge component). Civic participatory skills are closely related to civic intellectual skills; however, because the nature of the analyses for this project precluded researchers from giving in-depth attention to participatory skills, the promotion of these skills in state standards is not addressed here. Thus, this chapter focuses on civic intellectual skills and, in particular, on the extent to which state standards' language signals attention to students' thinking skills.

Framework for Analysis and Methodology

Project researchers used the most current and complete version available of state social studies standards. (See the "Framework for Analysis and Methodology" section in chapter 3 for the steps taken by researchers to obtain these documents.) As in chapter 3, researchers reviewed the standards from 43 states; however, the Missouri social studies standards contain no explicit civics statements and were not included in the analysis. Thus, standards from 42 states were used to assess state standards' promotion of higher-order thinking skills and civic intellectual skills.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Framework

In conducting their assessment of the levels of civic education thinking skills required in state social studies standards, project researchers used as their framework for classification and analysis the intellectual skills framework from the *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (NAEP).[3] This NAEP intellectual skills framework categorizes "intellectual skills essential for informed, effective, and responsible citizenship … as *identifying and describing*, *explaining and analyzing*, and *evaluating, taking, and defending* positions on public issues."[4]

These three categories move from basic thinking skills to increasingly more sophisticated levels of thinking skills. The first category, *identifying and describing*, corresponds with knowledge and comprehension skills. "*Identifying* means to give the meaning or significance of things that are tangible (e.g., such as one's legislative representative) or intangible (e.g., concepts such as justice). To identify something may involve being able to distinguish it from something else; to classify or catalog something with similar items; or, in some cases, to determine its origin. *Describing* means to give a verbal or written account of an item's basic attributes or characteristics; describing may refer to tangible or intangible processes, institutions, functions, purposes, or qualities."[5] This category encompasses the concepts of remembering and defining material. Related action verbs include "understand," summarize," and "give examples of."

The second category, *explaining and analyzing*, corresponds with application and analysis skills of importance to citizens. "*Explaining* means to identify, describe, clarify, or interpret something. One may explain, for example, the causes of events, the meaning or significance of events and ideas, or the reasons for various acts or positions. *Analyzing* means to break something down into its constituent parts in order to clarify its meaning or significance. One may analyze, for example, the causes of events, the components and consequences of ideas, or social, political, or economic processes and institutions."[6] Skills in this category refer to the ability to use material in different contexts and to separate concepts into component parts. Examples of related action verbs are "compare and contrast," "examine," and "interpret."

The third, and highest, category, *evaluating, taking, and defending* positions, encompasses synthesis and evaluation skills. These are the "skills required for citizens to assess issues on the public agenda, to make judgments about issues, and to discuss their assessments with others in public or private. *Evaluating* positions means to use criteria or standards to make judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of positions on issues, goals promoted by the position, or means advocated to attain those goals. *Taking* a position refers to using criteria or standards to arrive at a position one can support by selecting from existing positions or creating a novel one. *Defending* a position refers to advancing arguments and offering evidence in favor of one's position and responding to or taking into account arguments opposed to one's position."[7] This category contains the concepts of bringing different ideas together and judging new material. Related action verbs include "assess," "integrate," and "appraise."

Locating Civics Content

Since many states do not use the term "civics" in their social studies standards, project researchers sought additional words in the standards that would signal the location of civics content, particularly language related to required intellectual skills. These words were "citizenship/citizens," "government/governance," "political science/systems," "democracy," and "law."

For each of the state standards, researchers examined courses (e.g., New York History), subjects (e.g., history), and themes (e.g., "People and Cultures") that serve as divisions for the social studies components. Within these areas, researchers reviewed headings and subheadings for all government, civics, and citizenship courses, as well as history, economics, and geography courses. Researchers did not examine psychology, sociology, or anthropology courses, because these are never required; the only elective examined was Mississippi's law-related education course. Researchers also did not analyze sample lesson plans, examples, or other items in the standards that were clearly optional; nor did they examine the civics content in each state's standards in detail to determine whether the content was the same as the content of the *National Standards for Civics and Government*. Examination of civics content was limited to state standards for grades 9-12. (Appendix C identifies the sections of the state social studies standards examined for civics content.)

Categorizing Civic Intellectual Skills

Project researchers initiated the categorization process by identifying, for each state, every individual civics statement in that state's social studies standards. For each of these statements, researchers compared the action verb(s) in the statement with the verbs associated with each of the three NAEP intellectual skills framework categories—*identifying and describing*, *explaining and analyzing*, or *evaluating, taking, and* *defending* positions—and then placed the statement in the appropriate NAEP framework category.

Table 4.1 lists the civics-related action verbs found in the 42 state standards examined by researchers for this component of the project. These verbs are grouped according to the three categories in the NAEP framework.

Table 4.1
Verbs Found in State Social Studies Standards

Identify and Describe

acquire an understanding
acquire in-depth understanding
be aware
characterize
cite examples of
define and illustrate
define and list
demonstrate
demonstrate an understanding
demonstrate knowledge
demonstrate why and how
describe
detail
develop an understanding
develop map skills
diagram
document
enumerate
give examples of
have knowledge and skills necessary to participate
identify
identify and cite
identify opportunities
illustrate
know
learn of
locate
outline
prepare maps
provide examples
recognize
show
study
summarize
trace
understand

Explain and Analyze

analyze
analyze and apply
analyze and compare
analyze and explain
apply
associate
categorize
compare
compare and contrast
consider the nature of
consider the need or importance of
construct and graph
determine
determine significance
differentiate
discuss
distinguish
elaborate
examine
explain
explain and apply
explore
infer
interpret
interpret and analyze
investigate
monitor for propaganda
place in the context of
relate
research issue to obtain information
utilize primary and secondary sources

Evaluate, Take, and Defend a Position

accept responsibility
act on the strategy
act out of respect for the rule of law
actively participate
appraise
articulate interests
assess
assess and evaluate
base personal citizenship action on reasoned judgment
choose best alternative
construct a policy statement
contribute to the maintenance of a democratic society
cooperate with others to assume role of
  create alternative scenarios
create new approaches to issues
critique
debate
decide upon the best method
decide what good government requires of citizens
defend position
define a personal position
demonstrate a reasoned commitment
demonstrate ability to assess
demonstrate an ability to exert influence
demonstrate characteristics of a lifelong learner
demonstrate collaboration
demonstrate responsibility
demonstrate the rights of U.S. citizenship
demonstrate tolerance
design a solution
develop and defend
develop and employ skills
develop policy
develop proposals
develop skills needed for informed participation
develop, plan, and evaluate
develop and define
establish, explain, and apply
evaluate
evaluate and defend
exercise political participation
express and defend
formulate policy statements
formulate positions and possible actions
formulate questions
identify, respect, and model
implement
influence
influence future ideas
integrate historical knowledge with historical skill
  to participate effectively
interact in real or simulated government processes
judge
justify
make informed choices
make rational choices
participate
participate in democratic process
plan and conduct
plan, implement, and reflect
practice
practice discussion and participation
predict
predict trends
prepare a position paper
reflect dispositions
select criteria to use in evaluating
select, apply, and defend criteria for evaluation
show through personal action
solve problems
synthesize
take a position
use skills in real-life community situations
weigh alternative viewpoints
work cooperatively and respectfully
work to achieve consensus

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

In many instances, a specific civics statement in a state's standards contains several action verbs (e.g., "identify" and "evaluate"). In those cases, project researchers placed the statement in the highest-level NAEP framework category represented by one or more of the verbs. For example, if the statement included the verbs "describe" (first category) and "synthesize" (third category), researchers placed the statement in the third, or highest-level, NAEP framework category. Further, if a section of a state's standards contains a sentence in which two distinct statements with civics content are separated by a semicolon, researchers treated each statement separately and placed each statement in the appropriate category based on the verb(s) used in that statement.

Consistent with the relationship between higher-order civic intellectual skills and civic participation, all statements related to civic participation were placed in the highest-level category of the NAEP framework. Some states would not have had any statements classified in the highest NAEP framework category were it not for the civic participation statements in their standards.

Categorization Issues

Civic education organizations and publications differ in their views regarding the examination and use of action verbs in state social studies standards to assess the level of higher-order thinking and civic intellectual skills required by the standards. For example, the *National Standards for Civics and Government* document is clear about its intentional use of some lower-level verbs in its standards: "Descriptions, explanations, and the evaluation, adoption, and defense of positions can range from basic intellectual tasks to those of the highest order.... [T]he verb 'identify' may specify a skill that may be exercised at a range of levels, from the very simple act, for example, of identifying a member of Congress in a particular district, to identifying the criteria being used in a Supreme Court opinion."[8]

North Dakota's social studies standards extend this point:

> Our use of the words "know" and "understand" should not be confused with the ways in which many people have used them in Bloom's Taxonomy. Our use refers to the **type** of knowledge (information), not the **depth** of knowledge or the activity in which students will engage to acquire the knowledge.... Some people may be concerned that the word "understand" is not measurable and may feel that it should not be used in the statement of standards. Our view is that there are many ways to show that you understand something and that using the word "understand" allows teachers flexibility in assessing students' knowledge.[9]

Project researchers understand and appreciate the point that action verbs used in standards may not be *intended* to be associated with lower-level thinking skills—and, therefore, should not be evaluated as such. However, just because states declare a new intent for these verbs does not mean the words will be interpreted in this way by social studies coordinators and teachers. Indeed, if the meaning of any given verb does not match its "typical" interpretation, then one might ask why any verbs should be used in the document. Why not simply list facts that students should know? The use of a particular verb in state standards indicates that state education policymakers and educators responsible for developing the standards have a specific meaning (i.e., the "typical" meaning) that social studies coordinators and teachers should take into account.

Moreover, the North Dakota perspective on the language of standards assumes that social studies coordinators and teachers peruse the introductions to state standards with enough attention to discover counterintuitive interpretations of action verbs in civics-related statements. It assumes that teachers understand the vague intent and interpretation of these verbs. When state standards and the words they use require extensive clarification, they lose their ability to provide coordinators and teachers with accessible, easy-to-understand guidelines.

Further, as the NAEP framework notes, "Research shows that intellectual skills are inseparable from knowledge."[10] In fact, the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment was constructed to explicitly test all the three categories of thinking skills in the NAEP intellectual skills framework: "Each test exercise in the NAEP Civics Assessment, therefore, will tap an aspect of knowledge as well as an intellectual skill. This strong relationship between content and intellectual skills results in a wide array of assessment tasks."[11] Thus, to illustrate, the test items in the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment at the grade-12 level were distributed across the three intellectual skills categories as follows:

1. 25 percent of test items *Identifying and Describing*
2. 40 percent of test items *Explaining and Analyzing*
3. 35 percent of test items *Evaluating, Taking, and Defending a Position.*[12]

Not every statement in a state's social studies standards should call for students to "evaluate, take, and defend a position." For example, students are unable to gain and apply evaluation skills (third category) unless they first gain description skills (first category) and analysis skills (second category). Indeed, the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment and the NAEP intellectual skills framework seek a balance among the three categories of thinking skills. States clearly are attempting to use the language of their standards to shape district, school, and teacher civic education practices, so they should choose verbs carefully to promote and reinforce the importance of engaging students in learning activities that require them to do more than simply "know" and "understand" civics concepts.

Levels of Civic Intellectual Skills in State Standards

Project researchers' analyses of the civics statements in the 42 state social studies standards show that most state standards emphasize that students should gain second-level civic intellectual skills, that is, the intellectual skills associated with the *explaining and analyzing* category of the NAEP framework. Across all 42 states whose standards were assessed, the mean percentage of state civics statements in this category is 47 percent. In addition, the mean percentage of state civics statements in the lowest (or first) category is 31 percent, while the mean percentage of state civics statements in the highest (or third) category is 22 percent. Table 4.2 provides a comprehensive overview of the levels of civic intellectual skills promoted in state social studies standards for grades 9-12.

Table 4.2
Levels of Civic Intellectual Skills Promoted in State Social Studies Standards

State	Relative Percentage of Skills at Each Level		
	Identify and Describe	Explain and Analyze	Evaluate, Take, and Defend a Position
National Standards for Civics and Government	*21*	*49*	*30*
Alabama	29	41	29
Alaska	71	11	17
Arizona	No social studies standards at this time		
Arkansas	13	67	20
California	6	63	31
Colorado	39	40	20
Connecticut	15	48	37
Delaware	50	30	20
Florida	83	0	17
Georgia	66	30	5
Hawaii	26	47	26
Idaho	34	47	19
Illinois	45	55	0
Indiana	34	45	21
Iowa	No social studies standards		
Kansas (draft)	28	60	13
Kentucky	53	47	0
Louisiana	5	29	67
Maine	42	21	38
Maryland (draft)	10	58	31
Massachusetts	41	44	15
Michigan	22	30	48
Minnesota	20	60	20
Mississippi	30	67	4
Missouri	Not evaluated because social studies standards contain no explicit civics		
Montana	No social studies standards at this time		
Nebraska	16	76	8
Nevada	No social studies standards at this time		
New Hampshire	29	69	3
New Jersey	35	47	18
New Mexico	17	50	33
New York	20	50	30

	Relative Percentage of Skills at Each Level		
State	Identify and Describe	Explain and Analyze	Evaluate, Take, and Defend a Position
North Carolina	24	53	23
North Dakota (draft)	100	0	0
Ohio	18	45	37
Oklahoma	10	80	10
Oregon	57	29	14
Pennsylvania	No social studies standards at this time		
Rhode Island	No social studies standards at this time		
South Carolina (draft)	32	47	21
South Dakota (draft)	20	65	15
Tennessee	13	75	13
Texas	37	49	14
Utah	33	39	28
Vermont	17	27	57
Virginia	6	83	11
Washington	18	60	23
West Virginia	23	66	11
Wisconsin	26	42	32
Wyoming	No social studies standards at this time		

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

For comparison, researchers also categorized the statements in the *National Standards for Civics and Government* (see the top line in table 4.2). This analysis identifies 30 percent of the national standards' statements as falling in the highest-order thinking skills category (i.e., *evaluating, taking, and defending a position*); 49 percent of the statements falling in the middle category (i.e., *explaining and analyzing*); and 21 percent falling in the lowest category (i.e., *identifying and describing*). These percentages for the national standards are higher than the state mean percentage for the top NAEP intellectual skills framework category, about the same as the state mean percentage for the middle category, and lower than the state mean percentage for the lowest category.

Most state standards, as well as the *National Standards for Civics and Government*, use the same action verbs repeatedly in their civics statements. The most common verbs used are "describe," "identify," "understand," "trace," "discuss," "explain," "compare and contrast," "analyze," and "evaluate."

The following examples illustrate several ways in which state standards call for higher-order civic intellectual skills:

1. "Define a personal position on issues while understanding the historical aspects of the positions and roles assumed by others."[13] (Alaska)

2. "Develop a policy on a public issue related to technology and society and formulate strategies for influencing public discussions associated with the issue."[14] (Arkansas)

3. "Students will use democratic understanding and civic values to work together with others, make informed judgements and decisions, and act in accordance with democratic processes and principles to protect individual rights, serve their interests and promote the common good in order to become effective citizens (and understand the role that governments have in demonstrating this understanding)."[15] (New Mexico)

It is interesting to note which states have the highest and lowest percentage rates of civics statements in their social studies standards in the highest-order thinking skills category of the NAEP framework. Particularly notable is Louisiana, with 67 percent of its civics statements calling for students to "evaluate" a concept (thus falling in the highest category). Other states with a high percentage of civics statements that require the highest-order thinking skills are Vermont (57 percent) and Michigan (48 percent). Table 4.3 lists the ten states with the highest percentages of their civics statements in the highest-order skills category.

Table 4.3
Ten States with the Highest Percentages of Their Standards' Civic Intellectual Skills in the Highest Level of the NAEP Framework

	Relative Percentage of Skills at Each Level		
State	**Identify and Describe**	**Explain and Analyze**	**Evaluate, Take, and Defend a Position**
Louisiana	5	29	67
Vermont	17	27	57
Michigan	22	30	48
Maine	42	21	38
Connecticut	15	48	37
Ohio	18	45	37
New Mexico	17	50	33
Wisconsin	26	42	32
Maryland (draft)	10	58	31
California	6	63	31

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

At the other extreme, three states (North Dakota, Kentucky, and Illinois) have none of their civics statements in the highest-order thinking skills category of the NAEP framework, according to project analyses. Four other states (New Hampshire, Mississippi, Georgia, and Nebraska) have less than 10 percent of their statements in this top category. Table 4.4 lists the ten states with the lowest percentages of their statements in the highest-order thinking skills category.

Table 4.4
Ten States with the Lowest Percentages of Their Standards' Civic Intellectual Skills in the Highest Level of the NAEP Framework

	Relative Percentage of Skills at Each Level		
State	**Identify and Describe**	**Explain and Analyze**	**Evaluate, Take, and Defend a Position**
North Dakota (draft)	100	0	0
Kentucky	53	47	0
Illinois	45	55	0
New Hampshire	29	69	3
Mississippi	30	67	4
Georgia	66	30	5
Nebraska	16	76	8
Oklahoma	10	80	10
West Virginia	23	66	11
Virginia	6	83	11

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

It is important to emphasize again that students must gain and be able to use the lowest-level thinking skills as well as the highest-level thinking skills. For example, students must be able to define a civics concept before they can explain or assess it. At the same time, some states have few civics statements in their standards that go beyond the most basic requirements (see table 4.4). North Dakota is a particularly interesting case. The authors of its standards document make an argument in the introduction to the standards that the repeated use of "understand" for every standards statement is not meant as a limitation on the way in which the material could be taught and assessed.[16] This is an important point; nevertheless, the choice of verbs also is important, as noted earlier, and North Dakota has created limited, basic standards that do not emphasize the importance of higher-order thinking skills.

Texas is another interesting case. Within its social studies standards, Texas uses different knowledge and skills categories. The knowledge headings generally use "understands" to describe what the student should learn, whereas the skills statements tend to use "analyze" and "evaluate." This distinction affected project researchers' intellectual skills categorization of the civics statements in the Texas standards, since knowledge and skills were considered separately. Had knowledge and skills been combined, they would have been counted as a single statement, which would have been placed in the highest-level NAEP framework category associated with any of the verbs. As a result, the Texas percentages in the top two framework categories likely are lower than they would have been under the alternative counting approach.

In its social studies standards, South Carolina separates intellectual skills into a unique section entitled "Process Skills." Researchers did not include this section in their examination of state standards, since it is not civics specific. Nevertheless, South

Carolina's explicit attention to the development of students' intellectual skills is commendable. Although researchers are concerned that social studies teachers might overlook this "Process Skills" section, South Carolina clearly is committed to emphasizing the importance of higher-order thinking skills.

As noted earlier, this examination of civics statements in state standards focused only on high school standards. However, one phenomenon that relates to all grade levels did surface in this review. Michigan, New Mexico, and Oregon use predominantly "lower-order" verbs in their elementary standards and reserve the "higher-order" verbs for the high school grades. Project researchers are concerned that this practice exists, since it sends a message that elementary students cannot or should not be required to gain and use higher-order thinking skills. For example, while second graders may not be able to evaluate, take, and defend a position with as much sophistication as eleventh graders, the second graders certainly should be exploring these higher-order intellectual skills to the greatest extent possible in ways appropriate for their age.

Finally, project researchers commend the states that highlight the relationships in their social studies standards between civic intellectual skills and civic participation. For example, the standards in Michigan, Vermont, Colorado, Ohio, and Connecticut all have civics statements incorporating high-level intellectual skills that require active participation by students. These states not only emphasize participation within their standards but also do so in a way that clearly indicates students actually should be participating (not just *talking* about participation). This is in sharp contrast to the states that fail to mention participation at all, including Kentucky, Arkansas, and Missouri. If states value students' civic participation, then they must call for it in their standards and also use language in their standards statements that promotes the effective and informed application of higher-order civic intellectual skills in the political process and civil society.

Conclusions

On average, the civics content in states' social studies standards emphasizes mid-level thinking skills (e.g., explaining and analyzing a position) over any other level. Across all 42 states whose standards were assessed, the mean percentage of state civics statements that use verbs in the middle category of the NAEP intellectual skills framework is 47 percent. This percentage is very similar to the percentage of civics statements devoted to mid-level thinking skills in the *National Standards for Civics and Government* (49 percent). The mean percentage of state civics statements calling for students' use of the lowest level of intellectual skills (e.g., identifying and describing a position) is 31 percent. With 21 percent of all civics statements using verbs that call upon students to apply the lowest-level thinking skills, the national standards place less emphasis on these skills. On average, state standards give the least emphasis to the most challenging and complex civic intellectual skills, namely, to evaluate, take, and defend positions; the mean percentage of state civics statements using verbs in this category is 22 percent. In contrast, statements requiring the use of the highest level of thinking skills account for 30 percent of the statements in the *National Standards for Civics and Government*. While some states actively encourage the development of highest-order thinking skills, such states are an exception to a common trend of giving too little emphasis in state standards to the highest-order skills that all citizens need.

Neglect by state social studies standards of the highest level of intellectual skills has important consequences. If students do not learn how to evaluate, take, and defend positions, their effective and informed involvement in civic life is severely hampered, if not made altogether impossible. These skills are required for citizens to be able to assess issues of public concern, determine their personal position on those issues, and then interact capably with other citizens. Students also must be able to identify and describe concepts and to identify and analyze ideas. States should give adequate attention in their standards to all three levels of thinking skills and should be prepared to use their standards to equip students with all the intellectual skills they will need to keep this democracy healthy and strong.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest steps that could be taken to ensure that state social studies standards more effectively promote students' civic intellectual skills.

1. *State education policymakers should ensure that state social studies standards use words in their civics statements that promote higher-order civic intellectual (i.e., thinking) skills.* Word choice is critically important in writing state policies (including standards) that directly influence school district, school, and teacher policy interpretations and classroom practices. There is a difference between a student's understanding a civics concept and a student's analyzing or evaluating that concept. The latter calls for a level of intellectual skills that clearly requires more from the student than does the former. All states should seek to develop this higher level of intellectual skills among its students, and state academic standards should reflect this higher expectation.

2. *State education policymakers, when promoting civic intellectual skills in social studies standards, should work with school district coordinators and teachers to ensure that the standards' civics statements and their relationship to state education goals and policies are communicated and disseminated effectively to teachers.* Effective K-12 civic education requires that state standards and other policies include clear statements affirming the importance of all three levels of civic intellectual skills. However, writing appropriate state standards and creating other state policies is not enough. It is equally important that state education policymakers ensure that teachers, who must apply the civics statements in their lesson plans and classroom activities, are informed frequently and accurately about the intellectual skills addressed by the statements and the rationale for the statements' inclusion in the standards. Means of communication and dissemination should include print and electronic materials distributed through state department of education Web sites, teacher professional development workshops, educator listservs, and other means.

Notes

[1] Barry K. Beyer, *Improving Student Thinking: A Comprehensive Approach* (Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon, 1997), p. 22 (emphasis added).

[2] Ibid., p. 23 (emphasis added).

[3] National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (Washington, D.C., 1998), pp. 24-28, 71.

[4] Ibid., p. 24 (emphasis added).

[5] Ibid., p. 25.

[6] Ibid., p. 26.

[7] Ibid., p. 27.

[8] Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, Calif., 1994), p. 5.

[9] North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, *North Dakota Social Studies Standards (Draft)* (Bismarck, N. Dak., 1998), p. 2.

[10] National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress*, pp. 36-37.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., p. 37.

[13] Alaska Department of Education, *Alaska Standards: Content Standards for Alaska Students* (Juneau, Alaska, 1996), p. 29.

[14] Arkansas Department of Education, *Arkansas Social Studies Curriculum Framework* (Little Rock, Ark., 1994), p. 13.

[15] New Mexico State Department of Education, *Content Standards with Benchmarks for Kindergarten Through 12th Grade*, n.p.

[16] North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, *North Dakota Social Studies Standards*, p. 2.

Chapter 5. Promoting Civic Knowledge in State Standards

To be an informed and effective citizen requires that an individual possess the civic skills to use "knowledge to think and act effectively and in a reasoned manner in response to the challenges of civic life in a constitutional democracy."[1] Possessing the civic dispositions that "pertain to the rights and responsibilities of individuals in society and to the advancement of the ideals of the polity" is also necessary.[2]

Without civic knowledge, however, there is no foundation for applying civic skills or for exhibiting civic dispositions. Civic knowledge is the content dimension of civic education. It is what citizens, including youth, should know about civic life, politics, government, the American political system, the U.S. Constitution, world affairs, and the role of citizens in American democracy.

This chapter focuses on civic knowledge statements in state social studies standards, complementing the civic education components of state standards assessed in chapters 3 and 4. Civic knowledge is the most frequently addressed civic education component in state standards and related policies; it also generally is the component of civic education to which most individuals refer when discussing civics content in school curricula.

Framework for Analysis and Methodology

Project researchers used the most current and complete version available of state social studies standards. (See the "Framework for Analysis and Methodology" section in chapter 3 for the steps taken by researchers to obtain these documents.)

In assessing state standards' civics statements, project researchers reviewed in detail the standards in seven states: California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, and Texas. These states initially were selected as the sites for researcher visits to examine what factors shape civic education policies and practices at the school district level. Project researchers based the selection of the seven states on discussions with CCE staff and on a variety of criteria, including geographic diversity, urban/rural diversity, state influence in national education reform, types of state civics standards, and extent to which curricular decisions are centralized at the state level or under local control. Researchers limited their assessment to these seven states' social studies standards and to grades 9-12. It would be possible, however, to extend the analysis in this chapter to all states and all grades.

National Standards for Civics and Government Framework

In conducting their assessment of the extent to which state standards promote civic knowledge, project researchers used as their primary framework for analysis the five organizing questions and associated civics topics that serve as the framework for grades 9-12 in the *National Standards for Civics and Government.*[3] The same five organizing questions and similar civics topics serve as the knowledge assessment framework for the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment.[4]

Table 5.1 lists the organizing questions and civics topics from the national standards framework.

Table 5.1
Organizing Questions and Civics Topics in the *National Standards for Civics and Government* Framework

Question 1: *What are civic life, politics, and government?*	**Question 2:** *What are the foundations of the American political system?*	**Question 3:** *How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?*	**Question 4:** *What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?*	**Question 5:** *What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?*
Defining civic life, politics, and government	The American idea of constitutional government	Distributing governmental power and preventing its abuse	Nation-states	The meaning of citizenship in the United States
Necessity of politics and government	How American constitutional government has shaped the character of American society	The American federal system	Interactions among nation-states	Becoming a citizen
The purposes of politics and government	Distinctive characteristics of American society	The institutions of the national government	International organizations	Personal rights
Limited and unlimited governments	The role of voluntarism in American life	Major responsibilities of the national government in domestic and foreign policy	The historical context of United States foreign policy	Political rights
The rule of law	The role of organized groups in political life	Financing government through taxation	Making and implementing United States foreign policy	Economic rights
Civil society and government	Diversity in American society	The constitutional status of state and local governments	The ends and means of United States foreign policy	Relationships among personal, political, and economic rights
The relationship of limited government to political and economic freedom	American national identity and political culture	Organization of state and local governments	Impact of American concepts of democracy and individual rights on the world	Scope and limits of rights
Concepts of "constitution"	Character of American political conflict	Major responsibilities of state and local governments	Political developments	Personal responsibilities
Purposes and uses of constitutions	Liberalism and American constitutional democracy	The place of law in American society	Economic, technological, and cultural developments	Civic responsibilities
Conditions under which constitutional government flourishes	Republicanism and American constitutional democracy	Judicial protection of the rights of individuals	Demographic and environmental developments	Dispositions that lead the citizen to be an independent member of society
Shared powers and parliamentary systems	Fundamental values and principles	The public agenda	United States and international organizations	Dispositions that foster respect for individual worth and human dignity
Confederal, federal, and unitary systems	Conflicts among values and principles in American political and social life	Public opinion and behavior of the electorate		Dispositions that incline the citizen to public affairs
Nature of representation	Disparities between ideals and reality in American political and social life	Political communication: television, radio, the press, and political persuasion		Dispositions that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in public affairs

Question 1: *What are civic life, politics, and government?*	**Question 2:** *What are the foundations of the American political system?*	**Question 3:** *How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?*	**Question 4:** *What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?*	**Question 5:** *What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?*
		Political parties, campaigns, and elections		The relationship between politics and the attainment of individual and public goals
		Associations and groups		The difference between political and social participation
		Forming and carrying out public policy		Forms of political participation
				Political leadership and careers in public service
				Knowledge and participation

Source: Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, Calif., 1994), pp. 141-45.

Locating Civics Content

Project researchers used the organizing questions and associated civics topics in the national standards framework for locating and assessing civics content in state social studies standards. Standards statements were identified as "civics statements" if their content matched one or more of the civics topics in the national standards (and NAEP) framework.

In those states (among the seven) whose social studies standards are organized by courses, project researchers looked for civics statements in the standards' sections associated with courses covering United States history, world history, geography, economics, government, and civics. Researchers did not examine elective subjects, such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology. In the few states whose standards are not course based, researchers looked at all social studies standards for grades 9-12. Table 5.2 summarizes the courses and subjects from each state's social studies standards for grades 9-12 that researchers examined. (See Appendix D for summary descriptions of all states' social studies standards and their organization.)

The three sections that follow examine alternative ways to assess the extent to which state social studies standards address civic knowledge:

1. the thoroughness with which the civics statements in a state's standards address the five organizing questions and their associated civics topics in the national standards framework (i.e., the percentage of the civics topics, in total and by organizing question, addressed by one or more civics statements in a state's standards);
2. the relative attention that the civics statements in a state's standards give to each of the five organizing questions in the framework; and

3. the extent to which the civics statements in a state's standards specify the names of documents, individuals, events, and the like that should be included among the civics topics taught.

Table 5.2
Sections of State Social Studies Standards Examined to Determine the Civics Content of the Standards

State	Courses/Subjects Examined
California	World History, Culture and Geography: The Modern World; U.S. History and Geography; Principles of American Democracy; Principles of Economics
Florida	Time Continuity and Change; People, Places, and Environments; The Government and the Citizen; Economics
Indiana	Economics; U.S. Government; U.S. History; World Geography; World History/Civilization
Nebraska	World History; World Geography; U.S. History; U.S. and Nebraska Government and the Economy
New York	History of the United States and New York; World History; Geography; Economics; Civics, Citizenship and Government
Ohio	American Heritage; People in Society; World Interactions; Decision Making and Resources; Democratic Processes; Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities
Texas	U.S. History since Reconstruction; World History; World Geography; Government; Economics

Sources: California State Board of Education, *History/Social Science Content Standards, Grades K-12* (Sacramento, Calif., 1998), n.p.; Florida Department of Education, *Sunshine State Standards: Pre-K-12 Social Studies* (Tallahassee, Fla., 1996), n.p; Indiana Department of Education, *The Social Studies Proficiency Guide: An Aid to Curriculum Development* (Indianapolis, Ind., 1996), n.p; Nebraska State Board of Education, *Nebraska K-12 Social Studies Standards* (Lincoln, Neb., 1998), n.p; New York State Education Department, *Learning Standards for Social Studies* (Albany, N.Y., 1996), n.p; Ohio Department of Education, *Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program* (Columbus, Ohio, 1994), n.p.; and Texas Education Agency, *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies* (Austin, Tex., 1997), n.p.

Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address Organizing Questions and Civics Topics in the National Standards Framework

This analysis provides a measure of how thoroughly the civics statements in the social studies standards in each of the seven states address the five organizing questions and 71 associated civics topics in the national standards framework. Thoroughness refers to the percentage of all civics topics addressed, not how often any one topic is addressed. For example, if the civics statements in a state's standards address all civics topics associated with a particular organizing question, researchers would conclude that the thoroughness with which that question is addressed is 100 percent; if the statements address 2 of the 11 topics associated with an organizing question, they would conclude that the thoroughness with which that question is addressed is 18 percent.

As table 5.1 shows, each of the five organizing questions has 11 to 18 civics topics associated with it. Researchers assigned each civics statement to the topic or topics that matched the statement in terms of civic knowledge expected of students. A civics topic was considered to have been addressed in a state's standards if one or more civics statements in the standards matched it; whether a topic was matched once or more than once made no difference. If a statement in the standards did *not* match any of the framework's civics topics, it was excluded from further consideration.

Findings

California and Texas are the states whose standards' civics statements address the highest percentage of the 71 civics topics associated with the five organizing questions collectively. Thus, the California and Texas civics statements address the civics topics in the national standards framework more thoroughly than do the civics statements in any of the other five states' standards. More than one-half of the 71 topics are addressed by the statements in the California and Texas standards, as is also the case for Nebraska and Indiana. At the same time, the gap between the percentages of civics topics addressed in these four states and the percentages addressed in Ohio, Florida, and New York is quite wide. Table 5.3 summarizes these findings.

Table 5.3
Overall Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address the 71 Civics Topics in the *National Standards for Civics and Government* Framework

State	Number of Civics Topics Addressed	Percentage of Civics Topics Addressed
California	45	63
Texas	45	63
Nebraska	42	59
Indiana	41	58
Ohio	30	42
Florida	25	35
New York	21	30

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

The civics statements in the California standards and the Texas standards also address quite thoroughly the civics topics in all five of the organizing questions. The Texas statements address at least 44 percent of the civics topics associated with every one of the five questions, and in both California and Texas the civics statements in the state standards address at least 50 percent of the civics topics in four of the five questions. In

Indiana and Nebraska, the civics statements in the state standards address at least 50 percent of the topics in three of the five questions. In comparison, the civics statements in the Florida, Ohio, and New York standards address far less thoroughly the questions and topics in the national standards framework. The Florida and Ohio statements match at least 50 percent of the civics topics associated with only one question, and the New York civics statements address no more than 44 percent of the topics in any question.

Overall, the organizing question addressed least thoroughly by the civics statements in these seven states' standards (i.e., the question for which the smallest percentage of civics topics is addressed) is question 1. This question is addressed least thoroughly by the civics statements in the California, Indiana, Nebraska, and Ohio standards. The organizing question addressed most thoroughly by the civics statements in these states' standards (i.e., the question for which the greatest percentage of civics topics is addressed) is question 3. New York is the only state whose standards' statements address most thoroughly the topics associated with a question other than question 3; its statements address most thoroughly question 2.

The following five sections address, in turn, the extent to which the civics statements in the state standards address the civics topics associated with each of the five questions. Table 5.4 summarizes these findings.

Table 5.4
Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address the Civics Topics in Organizing Questions 1 Through 5 of the *National Standards for Civics and Government* Framework

	Percentage of Civics Topics Addressed, by Organizing Question						
Organizing Questions	**California**	**Florida**	**Indiana**	**Nebraska**	**New York**	**Ohio**	**Texas**
1. What are civic life, politics, and government?	39	31	39	23	23	8	*54*
2. What are the foundations of the American political system?	*69*	31	54	62	46	39	*69*
3. How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?	*94*	56	88	*94*	13	75	88
4. What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?	64	18	64	*73*	18	36	64
5. What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?	*50*	39	44	44	44	44	44

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.
Note: Numbers in italics indicate highest percentage of civics topics addressed for each organizing question.

Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address Civics Topics in Organizing Question 1

The 13 civics topics associated with question 1 encompass general concepts of government, civics, and politics. As table 5.4 shows, only in the Texas standards do the civics statements address more than one-half (7) of the question 1 topics. The civics statements in the Nebraska, New York, and Ohio standards address this question least thoroughly.

Every state's standards include civics statements that address the topic "Limited and unlimited governments," and statements in 5 of the 7 states' standards address "Confederal, federal, and unitary systems" of government. However, no state standards include civics statements that address the topics "The relationship of limited government to political and economic freedom," "Purposes and uses of constitutions," and "Nature of representation." These findings suggest that the civics statements in state social studies standards could address more thoroughly than they do now the topics of civic life, politics, and government associated with question 1.

Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address Civics Topics in Organizing Question 2

The 13 civics topics associated with question 2 encompass concepts relating to the foundations of the American political system. Although the civics statements in the New York standards address the topics in question 2 more thoroughly than they address the topics in any of the other four questions (46 percent), the civics statements in the Texas and California standards address the highest percentage of the civics topics associated with this question (69 percent).

Two of the civics topics in question 2, "The American idea of constitutional government" and "Character of American political conflict," are addressed by civics statements in every state's standards. The first of these topics includes knowledge about founding documents, the concept of popular sovereignty, and constitutional principles, whereas the second generally includes knowledge about such political conflicts in American history as civil rights, organized labor's struggle for rights, and slavery.

On the other hand, two of the question 2 civics topics, "The role of voluntarism in American life" and "How American constitutional government has shaped the character of American society," are not addressed by civics statements in any of the seven states' standards. Both of these topics focus on civic knowledge that is important for students but is not being addressed. The first topic expects students to understand the historical and contemporary role of voluntarism, and the second expects students to know how Americans have sought to make the ideals of the U.S. Constitution realities.

Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address Civics Topics in Organizing Question 3

The 16 civics topics associated with organizing question 3 encompass the constitutional embodiment of the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy. Table 5.4 includes the state findings with respect to this question. In every state except New York, the civics statements in the state standards address more than 55 percent of the civics topics associated with question 3; in four states (California, Indiana, Nebraska, and Texas), the statements address at least 88 percent of the civics topics in this question.

Interestingly, while every civics topic in question 3 is addressed by civics statements in at least two states' standards, only one topic, namely, "Forming and carrying out public policy," is addressed in all seven standards. Thus, all seven states' standards give explicit attention to students' abilities to evaluate, take, and defend positions about the development and implementation of public policy.

Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address Civics Topics in Organizing Question 4

The 11 civics topics associated with question 4 encompass principles and practices relating to the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs. As table 5.4 shows, state standards vary dramatically in the extent to which they include civics statements that address the international topics associated with this area of civic knowledge. Civics statements in Nebraska's standards address the highest percentage of the question 4 topics (73 percent), while the civics statements in the Florida and New York standards address the lowest percentage (18 percent).

These seven states address quite different combinations of the international affairs topics associated with this question. Of the 11 topics, 8 are addressed by civics statements in no more than four states' standards; however, every topic is addressed by at least one state's statements. Clearly, then, social studies standards in all seven states promote civic knowledge about international issues, but there is no consensus among these states about which issues are most important for students.

Thoroughness with Which State Standards Address Civics Topics in Organizing Question 5

The 18 civics topics associated with question 5 encompass the roles, rights, responsibilities, and dispositions of the citizen in American democracy. Table 5.4 summarizes project findings related to this question.

Interestingly, each of the seven states' standards includes civics statements that address between 39 percent and 50 percent of the civics topics in this question. However, there is little commonality among the states as to which question 5 civics topics are addressed. For example, 14 of the topics are addressed by civics statements in four or fewer states' standards. Only one of the topics, "Civic responsibilities," is addressed in all seven states' standards, while one topic, "Dispositions that lead the citizen to be an independent member of society," is not addressed in any of these standards.

Relative Attention Given in State Standards to Organizing Questions in the National Standards Framework

This analysis provides a measure of the relative attention given by civics statements in each state's standards to each of the five organizing questions in the national standards framework. As in the thoroughness analysis above, project researchers assigned each civics statement to the civics topic or topics that matched the statement in terms of civic knowledge expected of students. Here, however, if a statement matched two or more civics topics, even if the topics were associated with different questions, researchers counted *each* topic match. Whereas the thoroughness analysis focused on the percentage of *civics topics* matched in each organizing question (and overall) by the civics statements, the relative attention analysis focused on the relative percentage of civics topic *matches* associated with each question.

This relative attention analysis provides, for each state and each of the five organizing questions in the national standards framework, a percentage representing the proportion of that state's total civics topic matches that are associated with that question. Totaling each state's percentages across the five questions adds up to 100 percent, providing a basis for discussing each state's relative attention to the five questions. For example, if the civics statements in a state's standards have 6 matches with civics topics in question 1, 20 matches with topics in question 2, 14 matches with topics in question 3, 8 matches with topics in question 4, and 2 matches with topics in question 5, then the state's civics statements have a total of 50 civics topic matches. Thus, the percentage of the total matches associated with question 1 is 12 percent, which is the relative attention given question 1 by the civics statements in this state's standards. The relative attention given question 4, on the other hand, is 16 percent.

Findings

This section discusses project findings on a state-by-state basis, then compares these results with the relative attention given in the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment 12th-grade exercises to the civics topics associated with each of the five organizing questions in the national standards framework. Table 5.5 summarizes the state and NAEP relative attention percentages to which reference is made in this section.

Table 5.5
Relative Attention Given by State Standards to the Civics Topics in Organizing Questions 1 Through 5 of the *National Standards for Civics and Government* Framework

	Relative Attention Percentage, by Organizing Question				
State	**What are civic life, politics, and government?**	**What are the foundations of the American political system?**	**How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?**	**What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?**	**What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?**
California	11	18	37	23	12
Florida	12	18	27	15	27
Indiana	12	16	45	15	12
Nebraska	4	24	40	18	13
New York	14	32	18	7	29
Ohio	1	23	40	10	26
Texas	9	13	45	14	19
NAEP	*10*	*20*	*25*	*20*	*25*

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.
Note: Percentages in each row do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

California

As seen in table 5.5, the civics statements in California's standards focus to the greatest extent on the civics topics associated with organizing question 3 (i.e., the California statements give the greatest relative attention to the civics topics in question 3). Interestingly, this is also the question that the civics statements in the California standards address most thoroughly (94 percent coverage—see table 5.4). Thus, the statements in California's standards clearly focus primarily on civic knowledge associated with question 3, namely, How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?

The civics statements in California's standards give least attention to the civic knowledge in question 1. The civics content of this organizing question also is addressed least thoroughly in the California standards (see table 5.4). This reinforces the conclusion that in California there is a clear connection between how thoroughly a question is addressed by the civics statements in the state standards and the relative attention that the statements give the question.

Florida

Table 5.5 shows that Florida devotes the greatest attention in its state standards to the civics topics associated with questions 3 and 5. Florida devotes the least attention in its standards' civics statements to the question 1 civics topics. These results are similar to those for California.

Indiana

Like Florida and California, Indiana devotes the most attention in its standards' civics statements to the civics topics associated with question 3, as shown in table 5.5. Indeed, no other question receives more than about one-third of the attention given question 3 civic knowledge in the Indiana civics statements. The Indiana statements also address the civics topics in question 3 the most thoroughly (see table 5.4).

Like the civics statements in the California and Florida standards, Indiana's civics statements devote little attention to the topics in question 1; the civic knowledge in questions 1 and 5 receives the lowest attention among all questions in Indiana.

Nebraska

Nebraska, like California, Florida and Indiana, devotes the most attention in its standards' civics statements to civics topics associated with question 3 (table 5.5) and also addresses these topics most thoroughly (table 5.4).

The civics statements in Nebraska's standards give remarkably little attention to the civic knowledge associated with question 1; only 4 percent of the civics statement matches are with civics topics in this question. In other words, Nebraska's standards virtually ignore the civics topics relating to defining government, civic life, and politics. The statements in Nebraska's standards also address the civics topics in question 1 least thoroughly (table 5.4).

New York

Project researchers' analyses of the civics statements in New York's standards led to findings quite different from those in the other six states. As seen in table 5.5, civics statements in New York's standards give greatest attention to the civics topics in question 2. New York is the only state examined in which question 2 topics receive the most attention. New York is also the only state among the seven in which the standards' civics statements give question 4 topics the least attention; question 1 topics receive the least attention in other states.

Ohio

Table 5.5 shows that the civics statements in the social studies standards in Ohio, as in California, Florida, Indiana, and Nebraska, give the civics topics in question 3 more attention than they give the civics topics in any of the other four questions. These statements also address the civics topics of question 3 the most thoroughly (table 5.4).

On the other hand, only one of the 84 civics statements located in Ohio's standards addresses civics topics associated with question 1. This is the least attention given civics topics associated with any of the five questions by civics statements in any of the seven states' standards.

Texas

Table 5.5 shows that Texas likewise devotes the greatest attention in its standards' civics statements to the civics knowledge in question 3. Similar to Indiana, the Texas statements address the civics topics in question 3 more than twice as often as the civics topics in any other question.

Also, Texas devotes the least attention in its standards' civics statements to the topics in question 1. Interestingly, civics topics in question 1 are addressed more thoroughly by civics statements in the Texas standards than are those in question 5 (table 5.4), although the relative attention given question 1 is less than that given question 5.

Comparison between Relative Attention Given by Civics Statements in State Standards and by 12th-Grade Exercises in 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment to Organizing Questions in the National Standards Framework

In addition to showing the relative attention given by the civics statements for grades 9-12 in each state's standards to the civics topics associated with the five organizing questions in the national standards framework, table 5.5 shows the relative attention given by the 12th-grade exercises in the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment to these same civics topics.

Although the NAEP percentages for these five questions are not intended as recommendations for the relative attention that civics statements should give to each of these questions, it is useful to compare the NAEP percentages with the percentages for each of the seven states.

The initial impression one gains from table 5.5 is the general agreement that exists with respect to the relative attention given by the states and NAEP to each of the five organizing questions. The relative attention to the five questions in the Florida standards' civics statements is the closest to the relative attention to the five questions in the NAEP exercises. The statements in Florida, Ohio, and Texas, like the NAEP exercises, also give civics topics related to questions 3 and 5 the most attention.

The NAEP exercises give the least attention to the civic knowledge related to question 1, and the civic knowledge associated with this question also receives the least attention among all five questions from the civics statements in the standards in Texas, Ohio, Nebraska, Florida, and California—and is tied with question 5 for the least attention given to civics in Indiana.

A particularly interesting comparison involves the percentage differences between the greatest and least attention given by states' civics statements and by NAEP's exercises to the civics topics in the five questions. For NAEP, this difference is only 15 percentage points (25 percent vs. 10 percent); for the states, however, this difference is generally much greater. For example, the difference for California is 26 percentage points; for Indiana, 33 percentage points; for Nebraska, 36 percentage points; for New York, 25 percentage points; for Ohio, 39 percentage points; and for Texas, 36 percentage points. These state percentages indicate that writers of standards in these states have not achieved as much balanced attention with respect to the civics topics associated with the five organizing questions as the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment and the national standards framework have.

Specificity of Civics Statements in State Standards Knowledge

This analysis provides a measure of the extent to which civics statements in state standards specify the names of documents, individuals, events, and the like that should be included among the civics topics taught. After locating the civics statements in the social studies standards for grades 9-12 for each of the seven states, as in the above analyses, project researchers identified a civics statement as specific if it either includes clear, particular examples of civic knowledge or informs the teacher exactly what civics topics should be taught in the classroom. For each state, this process provided the number and the percentage of state standards' civics statements identified as specific.

Many of the seven states' standards included examples, sample activities, or suggested tasks. As a rule, researchers counted civics statements as specific if they included particular examples. However, when particular examples, sample activities, or tasks were listed separately, they were not counted as specific civics statements.

California, for instance, does not offer any examples, sample activities, or sample tasks in addition to its social studies standards, which are grouped by headings, with items listed below each heading. Nebraska's standards format is similar to that of California. For both states, researchers considered all the headings and items separately when determining the specificity of the civics statements.

Florida does not provide additional specific examples, activities, or tasks, either. Its standards are grouped by topic, grade, and subject area. Researchers reviewed every civics statement for grades 9-12 in the standards.

Indiana's social studies standards offer "sample student activities/projects" in addition to the statements. Because these activities and projects explain how the civics content *could* be taught and do not specify what *should* be taught, researchers did not consider these activities and projects when determining the specificity of the statements.

In New York, the social studies standards are presented as statements in five categories. Researchers examined each of these statements separately. Although New York offers sample tasks for students, these tasks are not paired with the civics statements, and it is not clear how to pair them. In addition, most of the sample tasks are simply ideas for lessons rather than examples of items that should be taught. Thus, researchers did not consider these sample tasks when determining the specificity of the statements.

Ohio's social studies standards are organized by grade and topic. Researchers examined each civics statement under each topic separately. In addition, Ohio offers examples to supplement the civics statements. Because each example is clearly linked with the civics statement preceding it and clearly specifies what should be taught, researchers considered these examples in determining whether statements were specific.

Texas' standards are most similar to those of California and Nebraska. Researchers considered all relevant headings and subheadings separately to determine whether the civics statements in the standards were specific.

Findings

Table 5.6 summarizes the results of the specificity analysis. For each state, the table shows the percentage of the civics statements in that state's standards that are specific and also the total number of civics statements in the standards that are specific.

Table 5.6
Specificity of Civics Statements in State Standards

State	Percentage of Civics Statements in State Standards Identified as Specific	Number of Civics Statements in State Standards Identified as Specific
California	53	100
Ohio	32	76
Texas	30	149
Nebraska	26	95
Florida	16	21
New York	15	26
Indiana	13	100

Source: LBJ School assessment of state social studies standards, September 1998-May 1999.

As seen in table 5.6, more than 50 percent of the civics statements in California's social studies standards are specific, a much higher percentage than that of any other state. The specificity percentage for each of Nebraska, Texas, and Ohio is between 26 and 32 percent. In each of Indiana, New York, and Florida, however, 16 percent or fewer civics statements are specific. These results differ from expectations.

Researchers anticipated that states with centralized decision making with respect to curricula, such as Texas, California and Florida, might have the most specific standards, whereas states with greater local control, such as Indiana, New York, Nebraska, and Ohio, might have the least specific standards. It was expected that states with state-level control would use the social studies standards and their civics statements as a means through which to influence and demonstrate to teachers and district officials what should be taught.

This is not consistently the situation. While California's civics statements are indeed clearly specific, Texas' statements are somewhat less specific and Florida's statements are much less specific. Thus, it is possible that the specificity analysis did not capture the extent to which specificity is communicated from state education policymakers, which could be the case for several reasons.

First, it is possible that specific guidance regarding civics topics that should be taught are given to districts and teachers by means other than through examples associated with civics statements in state standards. Perhaps a curriculum guide advises teachers what should be taught. Perhaps professional development activities specify for teachers what is to be taught. This analysis only looked at civics statements in state social studies standards and therefore might have missed key information regarding specificity communicated in other ways.

Second, researchers might have defined specificity more strictly in this project than have standards developers in the states. Had specificity been defined differently, perhaps the analysis would have produced different results.

Third, the analysis used here involved considerable judgment by researchers. Because standards in different states are very different from each other, it often was difficult to apply consistently a standard of specificity to the civics statements in the seven states' social studies standards. While decision rules and definitions were applied as consistently as possible, differences in the style, format, and organization of the standards required researchers to make difficult decisions regarding the specificity of civics statements.

Finally, project researchers emphasize that specificity of civics statements is not necessarily a desirable trait in state standards. On the one hand, highly specific statements may help ensure that all students at the same grade level in a state learn the same civic knowledge and perform higher on state assessments based on these statements. On the other hand, less specific statements may allow a teacher greater freedom and creativity in determining what students learn and may lead to higher levels of civic knowledge on the part of students. Project researchers believe that insights about the extent of specificity of state standards' civics statements provide useful information about a state's approach to assessment of student performance, as well as complement the other civic knowledge analyses in this chapter.

Conclusions

The civic knowledge content of the California, Indiana, Nebraska, and Texas social studies standards is similar with respect to the measures analyzed in this chapter. These four states' standards are more thorough than those of the other three states with respect to the extent with which the civics statements in the standards address the civics topics in the national standards framework. Although the Texas standards' civics statements address 54 percent of the civics topics in question 1, compared with less than 40 percent for each of California, Indiana, and Nebraska, these four states' standards address a remarkably similar percentage of the civics topics in each of the other four organizing questions. For example, question 3 is most thoroughly addressed by the statements in each of these four states' standards. Question 3 also has the most relative attention given to it by the statements in each of these four states' standards. With respect to the specificity of the civics statements in state standards, California stands alone at the top (53 percent), while the civics statements in Indiana's standards are distinctive because of their relative lack of specificity (13 percent).

The civics statements in the Ohio and Florida social studies standards are similar with respect to their relative attention to the organizing questions in the national standards framework. The statements in these states' standards also address the topics in question 3 most thoroughly, those in question 5 second most thoroughly, and those in question 2 third most thoroughly. The uniqueness in Ohio's standards is that the civics statements address only one civics topic associated with question 1, by far the lowest percentage of any question's topics addressed by the civics statements in any state standards.

The uniqueness of New York's standards must be considered. First, the civics statements in these standards address a lower percentage of the national standards framework topics than the civics statements in any of the other six states' standards, that is, the New York statements are less thorough than those of the other six states. Second, the New York statements address question 2 most thoroughly, while question 3, addressed most thoroughly by the standards' statements in the other six states, is least thoroughly addressed by the statements in the New York standards. The specificity of the civics statements in the New York's standards is similar to that of Indiana and Florida; the percentage for each of these states is under 20 percent.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest steps that could be taken to ensure that state social studies standards more effectively promote students' civic knowledge.

1. *State education policymakers should work with CCE and its state coordinators to ensure that state social studies standards' civics statements address as many of the civics topics in the national standards framework as possible.* Each of the 71 civics topics that constitute the elements of the framework's five organizing questions (see table 5.1) represents a dimension of civic knowledge that is important for students. Although the civics statements in the standards in four of the seven states examined (i.e., California, Indiana, Nebraska, and Texas) address greater than 55 percent of these topics, the standards' statements in the other three states address a far small percentage of these topics (e.g., New York's statements address only 30 percent of the topics). The thoroughness (or lack of thoroughness) with which the civics statements in a state's standards address the civics topics in the national standards framework sends clear signals to educators in the state regarding the importance (or lack of importance) given to these topics by state education policymakers. Policymakers should work with educators to identify gaps in the civics topics promoted by the standards' civics statements, then explore the revisions necessary in the civics content of the standards to meet state education and citizenship goals.

2. *State education policymakers should work with CCE and its state coordinators to ensure that state social studies standards' civics statements give balanced attention to the organizing questions and associated civics topics in the national standards framework.* Civics statements in state standards should address the five organizing questions (see table 5.1) in the balanced way that is exhibited by the 12th-grade exercises in the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment (see table 5.5). While the civics statements in a few states' standards (e.g., those of Florida) address the organizing

questions with such balance, most do not. The Ohio standards' statements, for example, give far too little attention to question 1 (What are civic life, politics, and government?) and perhaps too much attention to question 3 (How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?). The organizing question most frequently neglected by the civics statements in the seven states' standards is question 4 (What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?). Greater attention to the international topics associated with this question could go far toward educating citizens who understand foreign affairs issues.

3. *State education policymakers should work with school district coordinators and teachers to ensure that state standards' civics statements enable educators to understand clearly the civics content and the rationale for its inclusion in the standards, as well as to incorporate the civics content in their instruction.* If the civics statements in state standards are thorough and balanced with respect to the organizing questions and civics topics in the national standards framework (see recommendations 1 and 2 above), then clearly stated and specific civics statements can provide that additional guidance to teachers to enhance their students' civics learning. Specific and clear civics statements may help ensure that all students at the same grade level in a state learn the same civic knowledge and perform at a higher level on state assessments that may exist, as long as these statements do not constrain teachers from creating an instructional environment in which students' civic knowledge is enhanced.

4. *State education policymakers should work with school district coordinators and teachers to ensure that state standards' civics statements and their relationship to state education goals and policies are communicated and disseminated effectively to district coordinators and teachers.* Effective K-12 civic education in a state requires that state policies, particularly social studies standards, include civics statements that address the organizing questions and civics topics in the national standards framework. But inclusion of these statements is not sufficient. It is equally crucial that state education policymakers take the lead in ensuring that district educators, who must translate the statements into lesson plans and classroom activities, are informed frequently and accurately about the civics topics addressed by the statements and the rationale underlying the statements' inclusion in the standards. Means of communication and dissemination should include print and electronic materials distributed through state department of education Web sites, teacher professional development workshops, educator listservs, and other means.

Notes

[1] .National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (Washington, D.C., 1998), p. 18.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, Calif., 1994), pp. 141-45.

[4] National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress*, pp. 19-23, 66-70.

Chapter 6. Influences of State Standards on Civic Education Curricula and Course Content at the District Level

Chapters 2 through 5 focus on states' K-12 civic education policies and related requirements, with particular attention to the civics topics addressed in state social studies standards and the extent to which this civics content promotes the components of civic education. Chapters 6 through 11 shift the focus to school districts to identify and examine civic education standards, curricula, instructional materials, assessment, professional development, and extracurricular and co-curricular activities, plus the influences of organizations, individuals, and funding on district and school practices. These latter chapters give particular attention to the factors, including state policies and related requirements, that shape local civic education practices.

This chapter addresses teachers' familiarity with their states' standards and how school districts develop their civics-related curricula. It also discusses the effects of standards and related curricula on civics content in social studies courses, as viewed by the teachers, students, and administrators whom project researchers interviewed and surveyed in the seven states visited. This chapter shows that many teachers are not sufficiently familiar with the civics content in their states' standards and that many districts look to state standards for guidance in developing their civics-related curricula.

Framework for Analysis and Methodology

For the review and examination of the factors, including state standards and related requirements, that shape civic education policies and practices at the district level, project researchers conducted on-site visits in 13 school districts across the United States (two districts in each of California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, and Ohio; one district in Texas). During these visits in January and February 1999, researchers met with state and school district social studies coordinators, classroom teachers, students, and others (e.g., university professors of education) and observed civics classes. Researchers also distributed surveys to district social studies coordinators and to secondary social studies teachers in each of these districts, as well as in a second district in Texas, in February 1999. (Appendix E contains the teacher survey, and Appendix F contains the district coordinator survey.)

The selection of the seven states for researchers' visits was based on discussions with CCE staff and a variety of criteria, including geographic diversity, urban/rural diversity, state influence in national education reform, types of state civics standards, and extent to which curricular decisions are centralized at the state level or under local control. Within the selected states, criteria for selecting school districts included urban/suburban/rural diversity, demographic diversity, and permission to distribute secondary social studies teacher surveys.

Table 6.1 lists the school districts visited and surveyed in each of the seven states. (See Appendix G for brief descriptions of these 14 districts.)

Table 6.1
School Districts Visited and Surveyed

State	School Districts
California	Long Beach Unified School District *(3)*
	San Jose Unified School District *(6)*
Florida	Miami-Dade County Public Schools *(25)*
	Leon County Public Schools *(11)*
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation *(14)*
	School Town of Munster *(6)*
Nebraska	Lincoln Public Schools *(36)*
	Raymond Public Schools *(2)*
New York	Albany City School District *(7)*
	Niskayuna Central School District *(15)*
Ohio	Findlay School District *(9)*
	Putnam County Schools *(5)*
Texas	Austin Independent School District *(48)*
	McAllen Independent School District *(13)*

Note: Researchers visited all districts except Austin; teachers in all districts completed surveys. The number of project surveys completed and returned by secondary social studies teachers in each district is shown in italics in parentheses after the name of each district.

Review of State Standards and Other Civics Policies in the Seven States

Before examining in detail the standards-related findings from the district visits and surveys, it is worthwhile recalling results from chapters 2 through 5 that relate to civics content in the seven states' social studies standards.

None of these seven states presents the civics content in its state standards as separate civics standards (table 2.4). Three of the states (Florida, Ohio, and Texas) include in their social studies standards an explicit section with civics content, while the other four states (California, Indiana, Nebraska, and New York) lack explicit civics sections in their standards but integrate the civics content in the standards. Implementation of state standards by school districts is required in California, Florida, and Texas but not in the other four states (table 2.5). Regarding required courses, all seven states except Nebraska require a high school civics/government course; California and New York require a 12th-grade "capstone" civics/government course (table 2.6). None of the seven states has a state community service requirement, although Indiana and Ohio have statewide voluntary programs (table 2.11).

With respect to the state standards' promotion of students' civic dispositions (chapter 3), the social studies standards in California, Indiana, Nebraska, Ohio, and Texas include significant civics language in the standards' introductory statements of purpose (table 3.1). Moreover, the standards in California, Indiana, Nebraska, and Texas are course based; those in Florida and New York are subject based; and the Ohio standards are theme based (table 3.3). Civics content is relatively accessible by course/subject/theme in the standards of Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, and Texas; however, the civics content is difficult to find in the California standards (table 3.4).

In terms of state standards' promotion of students' higher-order thinking skills and civic intellectual skills (see chapter 4), Ohio, California, and New York are the only states among these seven with standards in which 30 percent or more of the intellectual skills promoted require that students evaluate, take, and defend a position (i.e., skills associated with verbs in the highest category in the NAEP framework of intellectual skills). Florida, Indiana, and Texas percentages are between 13 and 21 percent, whereas Nebraska's is less than 10 percent (table 4.2).

With respect to the civic knowledge analyses conducted in chapter 5, the California and Texas standards are the most thorough in terms of the percentage of civics topics in the national standards framework addressed by civics statements in the standards; each of these states' standards address 63 percent of the topics. Nebraska (59 percent), Indiana (58 percent), Ohio (42 percent), Florida (35), and New York (30 percent) follow in that order (table 5.3). The relative attention that Florida gives to each of the five organizing questions in the national standards framework is more balanced than the attention given by any other state and more similar to the relative attention that the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment gives to these five questions in its grade-12 exercises. Florida's percentages for the five questions are 12, 18, 27, 15, and 27, respectively, while NAEP's are 10, 20, 25, 20, and 25, respectively (table 5.5). Finally, the only state for which more than 50 percent of the civics statements in the state standards are specific is California; Ohio, Texas, and Nebraska have percentages of about 30 percent, while Florida, New York, and Indiana percentages are approximately 15 percent (table 5.6).

State Standards and Civic Education Curricula at the District Level

As discussed in earlier chapters, standards are policy documents that generally detail expectations and requirements for what is taught to and learned by students. Ideally, standards represent baselines for student learning experiences. Good social studies standards are flexible and reasonable in their scope, provide appropriate sequencing of explicit civic education content throughout the social studies at all levels, are realistic in their expectations of students' learning abilities at these levels, and encourage higher-order thinking skills and activities that promote civic participation and dispositions.

Project researchers visited with some social studies teachers who expressed irritation with the scope of the standards in their states. For example, a middle school teacher in Albany told researchers that the amount "we have to teach is scientifically impossible."[1] A teacher in Indiana had similar feelings, saying, "In Indiana, I can't teach [civics] to the regular class because of curriculum rigidness."[2] A Putnam County high school teacher, on the other hand, expressed satisfaction with the Ohio standards when stating, "There is still enough freedom within the standards and the course of study to let you do your own thing in the classroom. They are pretty broad."[3]

Because standards are essentially lists of educational expectations, they can be powerful documents. Ideally, standards are used as source documents for creating curricula, designing course sequences and content, writing texts, and evaluating educational outcomes. In this capacity, they have the potential to affect many aspects of students' educational experiences. Researchers learned that when the civics content in state standards changes, the amount of time spent on civics in the classroom also changes, as do the grade levels at which civics is taught, the topics in civics-related courses, the instructional materials, and the content of assessments and course requirements.

An important issue when considering how and why states create standards and curricula in different ways is the issue of state control versus local control. States with centralized education decision making often have mandatory state standards, strict control over district creation and implementation of curricula, statewide assessment tests, and state-level textbook adoption. Local-control states are more likely to have optional state standards, freedom for districts to create curricula and choose textbooks, and no state assessment tests. Among the seven states examined in this project, Texas, California, and Florida school districts experience more centralized state control, whereas Nebraska, New York, Ohio, and Indiana districts have more local control. However, these distinctions are blurred. Most districts, whether or not state standards are mandated in their states, follow the state standards to some extent because state assessment tests are tied to the standards or to the textbooks that are tied to the standards, or because it is just easier to work from the standards than to create curricula in a vacuum. Some states with centralized control also still allow some flexibility with respect to curricula and textbooks.

Many variables affect the influence state standards have on district educational practices. Since states have varying degrees of control over education, the most immediate difference in the relative influence of state standards are the various methods used by states to encourage the adoption and use of standards. Probably the most powerful of these methods is standardized testing and reporting of scores. Only one of the seven states visited, namely, Ohio, specifically tests the civic education content in its standards. Thus, in Ohio, district curricula throughout the state are strongly aligned with the state standards, which are voluntary. As a middle school curriculum coordinator in Ottawa, Ohio, noted, "While it is not mandated by state law that the districts must use these standards, it benefits the districts to do so, because the mandated statewide assessment tests are based on the standards."[4]

Texas, a state with more centralized control, requires district adoption of its state standards. It also has centralized textbook adoption, which effectively ensures that social studies textbooks in all districts align with the standards. In states like Nebraska that have more local control and no standardized testing at present, the standards often have to sell themselves. Nebraska does provide its districts with incentives for adopting the standards, though, and will institute mandatory assessment testing next year. The

Raymond school district, for example, received a $500,000 grant from the state to purchase computers and provide technology training to staff based on the state's understanding that the school district is in compliance with the state's voluntary standards.[5]

Teachers in all seven states spoke extensively about two additional factors that influence the effectiveness of state standards. One is the politicization of the standards' development process. The other, often related to the first, is the frequency of changes in the standards. Among the seven states visited, Florida teachers and administrators exhibited the most disdain for the standards' writing process in their state. A Leon County social studies developer contended that the *Sunshine State Standards* document was originally a good product, developed by Florida teachers, but it was "rewritten in three days by the Commissioner of Education's office" before the standards were enacted.[6] The executive director of the Florida Law-Related Education Association, Inc., concurred, noting that "the standards change with every administration. They're very political."[7] The teachers at Leon High School agree that "the standards are primarily a political creation, rather than an academic creation."[8] Nevertheless, despite teachers' varying (and often negative) opinions on the utility of standards for their day-to-day teaching, the ability of state standards to affect funding, textbook selection, course sequencing, and curricular design make them a strong force to positively or negatively influence civic education practices at the district level.

Teachers' Familiarity with State Standards

Although each of the seven states either includes civics content in an explicit section of its state social studies standards or integrates civics topics in its standards (table 2.4), teachers in all seven states who responded to the project survey are generally not very familiar with the extent to which their states' standards address civics content. Only about one-fourth of the responding teachers (26 percent) are "extremely familiar" with their state standards. In addition, 34 percent of teacher respondents claim they are "somewhat familiar" with their states' standards, while 18 percent say they are "not familiar" with these standards.[9] Table 6.2 shows this variability of teacher familiarity among the 14 districts with the civics content of the standards in their states.

Raymond teachers have the highest average familiarity with their state's standards (i.e., the lowest number in table 6.2); other districts with a high degree of teacher familiarity with their states' standards are Putnam County and Long Beach. San Jose teachers have the lowest average familiarity with their state's standards; Albany teachers have the next lowest average familiarity. Thus, in California, a significant gap in teacher familiarity with state standards exists with respect to the two districts visited.

A similar gap in teacher familiarity exists with respect to the two Ohio districts and the two Nebraska districts. In Ohio, for instance, Findlay has one of the four lowest levels of teacher familiarity, while Putnam County has the second highest. Indeed, all Putnam County teachers responding to the survey are at least somewhat familiar with Ohio's standards; no one was unfamiliar with them. This familiarity likely is due in part to the connection in Ohio between the standards, state assessments, and the courses of study that must be followed to ensure success on the assessments. Yet, in other states (e.g., Florida and Texas), the two districts visited have similar levels of teacher familiarity with the standards. Understanding the reasons for this variability is beyond the scope of this project; nevertheless, such variability is troubling, considering that state standards are intended to guide teachers' curriculum development and teaching.

Table 6.2
Familiarity of Secondary Social Studies Teachers with Civics Content in State Standards

State	School District	Average Response
California	Long Beach	2.67
	San Jose	5.33
Florida	Miami-Dade County	3.16
	Leon County	3.82
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh	4.00
	Munster	3.17
Nebraska	Lincoln	3.92
	Raymond	2.00
New York	Albany	4.83
	Niskayuna	3.79
Ohio	Findlay	4.00
	Putnam County	2.20
Texas	Austin	3.96
	McAllen	3.77

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Average Response: 1 = extremely familiar, 4 = somewhat familiar, 7 = not at all familiar.

Even if teachers are familiar with the state standards, they still often pay little or no attention to them. In Ohio, one middle school teacher said, "We know of the state standards, but we don't read them all the time."[10] Teachers in New York said they are primarily guided in their curriculum and course development by the textbooks. One teacher said, "I am going to admit that … I don't go home and read them [the social studies standards] every night."[11] Another said that, when teaching, "the last thing you're looking at is state standards."[12]

Teachers themselves suggested reasons why they do not take the time to familiarize themselves more with their state social studies or civics standards. The Findlay district social studies coordinator stated that there are so many different sets of standards that it makes familiarity with state standards a difficult process: "The problem is that each subgroup has its own national model—geography, history, political science, civics."[13]

Another reason why teachers may be unfamiliar with state standards is the frequency with which the standards change. For example, a teacher in New York said that he "never reads the standards," because if you "wait a week, they will change."[14] This same problem also appears to be occurring in Texas, which recently implemented new standards. Indeed, all 13 McAllen secondary social studies teachers responding to the survey reported that they are "not at all" familiar with the standards.[15]

One might also conjecture that teachers in districts in states in which the civics content of state standards is integrated throughout the standards might be less familiar with the standards than are teachers in states in which the civics content is in separate civics standards or appears as an explicit section in the social studies standards. As shown in table 2.4, Florida, Ohio, and Texas have more explicit civics content sections in their standards than do California, Indiana, Nebraska, and New York; thus, one might conclude that teachers in the first three states reported greater familiarity with their states' standards. However, this is not uniformly the case; indeed, Nebraska teachers responding to the project survey have, overall, the highest familiarity with the standards.

At the same time, however, some teachers may be more familiar with their states' standards than they report, since many district curricula are closely correlated with state standards. Therefore, although a teacher may not read state standards on a regular basis or be able to recite parts of the standards from memory, he or she could still know what the standards cover and be teaching students the material recommended or mandated by the state. In Florida, for example, the director of social studies for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools says that he is extremely familiar with the *Sunshine State Standards* because the district curriculum is closely correlated with the standards.[16]

Development of Civic Education Curricula at the District Level

Every school district develops its civics-related curricula a little differently; however, most use state standards or state curriculum frameworks as a guideline, with varying degrees of success. Almost without exception, district social studies coordinators in the districts visited reported that the *National Standards for Civics and Government* framework also has been used in the development of district civic education curricula.[17] In addition, many district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers believe that the curricula used in their districts are more rigorous than their states' standards.

This section examines the development of civics curricula in the 13 districts visited, showing the relationship of the district curricula to the civics content in the seven states' standards. It also examines teachers' familiarity with the civic education curricular policies adopted by their districts' school boards and by their schools, since knowledge of these policies is critically important in developing district curricula.

Relationship between State Standards' Civics Content and District Civics Curricula

California

California adopted new standards in history/social science in October 1998. The state does not require precise adherence to state standards, however; districts are free to develop and adopt their own district standards. San Jose Unified School District (SJUSD), for example, adopted district standards in math, science, and language arts.

Currently, no separate district social studies standards exist; however, district administrators expressed an interest in creating them. As the SJUSD manager of curriculum and learning resources commented, "Local standards are valuable because they can tweak state standards according to the student population."[18] To get district standards written and implemented, SJUSD established resource teacher positions at the district level in some subject areas; however, SJUSD does not have a social studies resource teacher because of funding shortages. It would be difficult to create district civics standards without this position being filled.[19]

SJUSD does have a curriculum framework for history/social science, although it is neither required nor assessed.[20] The current curriculum framework for history/social science incorporates civics into its K-12 Goals and Curriculum Strands. The three goals of the history/social science framework are (1) knowledge and cultural understanding, (2) democratic understanding and civic values, and (3) skills attainment and social participation. Strands under the second goal are national identity; constitutional heritage; and civic value, rights, and responsibilities, while the two strands under the third goal are critical thinking skills and participation skills. This framework allows quite a bit of freedom for teachers; however, as one SJUSD teacher expressed it, this "total autonomy" means a lack of continuity in learning.[21] For example, a high school teacher uncertain about what civics topics students have covered before being in his class said he gets disturbed when kids do not know what a veto is.[22]

Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) has developed district social studies standards with civics content. Its schools started to use the district standards during the 1994-95 school year, and many teachers believe the district standards in general are as rigorous and challenging as the state standards. The district's social studies standards are divided into seven groups: sociology, political systems, historical perspective, cultural anthropology, geography and human activity, principles of civics and government, and macroeconomics and microeconomics. The district social studies curriculum leader expressed a great deal of pride in the LBUSD standards: "I feel like we're four years ahead of the rest of California. The state standards are good, but of course there are missing pieces. We're trying to fill those in."[23]

LBUSD is taking steps to ensure that district resources and standards-based curricula actually reach individual classrooms. To aid teachers in teaching effectively the district's standards and curricula, the district has created a "standards coach" position for mathematics/science/social studies. This position was implemented during the 1998-99 school year.[24]

Florida

Florida has mandatory state standards in social studies; these standards include a civic education component. However, this requirement is given to the districts without any state assistance in the form of technical support or funding.[25] When Florida districts develop standards and curricula, they must ensure that these match the state standards. Therefore, Leon County Public Schools incorporates the *Sunshine State Standards* into its Social Studies Standards and Benchmarks. The social studies curriculum developer in

Leon County Public Schools said that the district's curriculum development process is inadequate, because Leon County is a "poor district" (like Raymond) and cannot supply resources or substitutes to enable teachers to participate in a serious curriculum development process. He also pointed out that even though the state standards have been around for a number of years, only this year have they been incorporated into the district's standards. He attributes this to the fact that until he was hired for his job (which is part time), the position had been vacant for approximately four years.[26]

To ensure state standards are covered in district standards and curricula, Florida requires that each teacher identify which state standards each lesson is intended to cover. However, teachers reported this to be "just a bureaucratic thing."[27] Most of them develop their lesson plans and then look up the standards to make sure they cover them, perhaps adding missing topics if necessary.[28] In addition, the state standards are very broad, so teachers have a lot of discretion over what to teach.[29]

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has developed a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), which is correlated to the state social studies standards.[30] The school district's administrative officers developed the CBC and are the most involved party in influencing decisions regarding civic education curricula in Miami-Dade County schools. Also very involved in civics curriculum development are the district's school board, school-level social studies coordinators, the state legislature, and community and professional groups, such as the Florida Law-Related Education Association, Inc., and the Close Up Foundation. Other groups somewhat involved in civics curricular decisions in Miami-Dade County include the State Department of Education, school principals, and individual social studies teachers.[31] In this district, then, the state standards are extremely important in the creation of curricula, with the district, on its own initiative, building on the state standards to create its own framework. However, although many parties are involved in the district's curriculum development process, teachers are not as actively involved as teachers are in other states and districts.

Indiana

The state social studies standards for Indiana are a guide to help districts create their own curricula. The Evansville-Vanderburgh district curriculum follows the state standards very closely. In the Munster district, advanced placement (AP) social studies teachers are given opportunities by the district to create their own curricula. However, teachers who teach standard (i.e., non-AP) social studies classes claim that they do not have these opportunities and remain constrained by the district curriculum, which, like that of Evansville-Vanderburgh, is closely related to the state standards.[32]

Nebraska

Although Nebraska's social studies standards are not mandatory for districts, the state requires that each district receiving state money complete a compliance survey showing that its district curriculum conforms to the standards.[33] Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) has used the state standards to create its district curriculum, but it also has made changes it deemed appropriate to meet district needs. For example, LPS offers a government course in ninth grade, not twelfth grade as the standards suggest, and it offers civics in sixth grade rather than fourth grade. Lincoln's social studies consultant thinks that government and civics are more appropriately taught at the LPS-specified grade levels than at the grade levels recommended in the state standards. LPS also integrates civics throughout the district curriculum more than the state standards do. The social studies consultant believes that, even though the district's curriculum does not match the standards exactly, it has the same objectives. She also thinks that the LPS curriculum is more rigorous than are the state standards.[34] Moreover, every new LPS teacher, when hired, is required to participate in district in-service training on the district curriculum.[35]

The LPS high school and elementary school curricula are developed differently. When the high school social studies and civics curriculum was revised two years ago, the state standards had not yet been developed, so the previous district curriculum and the national social studies standards were used to guide the effort. LPS teachers wrote the curriculum, with the help of consultants. After the curriculum was drafted, various constituent groups from the community reviewed it. The social studies and civics curriculum is reworked every seven years.[36]

The most recent revision of the LPS elementary school curriculum took four years. As in the revision of the high school curriculum, teachers again had an integral role. The team responsible for the elementary school curricular revision used the previous curriculum, national standards, other districts' curricula, and literature reviews to assist them in deciding on curricular revisions. Community leaders, parents, and faculty from the local university were all involved in this process. Elementary teachers use the curriculum as a basic blueprint and guideline for their classes, units, and lesson plans. These teachers also create social studies units in collaboration with teachers in other disciplines, particularly reading.[37] Interestingly, the state standards did not figure into this curricular revision; teachers did not think the standards were good or useful in the district's revision process.[38]

Raymond Public Schools, like LPS, uses the state standards as the basis for its civics curricula. However, Raymond follows the standards more closely, chiefly because district-level curriculum development is costly and Raymond does not have the funds to modify significantly the state standards or to pay teachers to write district-specific curricula. This lack of resources is a notable difference between urban and rural districts and between large and small ones.

Although Nebraska suggests district adherence to its state standards, in reality, districts use the standards only to the extent they find them useful. However, the standards are still relatively new, so it remains to be seen how useful they are for classroom teachers.

New York

New York has state social studies standards, but each school district has the freedom to develop its own curricula. Because a statewide test is required for graduation in many subjects, including social studies, preparing students for the test guides curricular decisions extensively. Albany City School District has not taken advantage of the freedom to create district civics curricula to any significant extent. Rather, it has focused on transmitting to teachers the content and requirements of the statewide test.

In sharp contrast, Niskayuna Central School District (NCSD) has developed its own social studies curriculum, called Crossroads, which includes civics content.[39] The Social Studies Core Group, an organization of teachers and parents, translated the state standards into a curriculum for NCSD. However, implementation is entirely up to teachers. As one high school teacher stated, "I believe that most [teachers] toss [the district curriculum] aside and go to the state curriculum."[40] When developing its curriculum, NCSD emphasized infusing civics into courses, rather than having civics courses. A middle school teacher summed up the feelings about civics by saying, "It's hard to pick out what is civics because we all do it; it's always part of what we do."[41] A high school teacher essentially agreed: "You could take any social studies class and include civics. It doesn't matter what you teach in social studies, civics is there."[42] Another teacher specifically argued that he "would not teach civics as a separate subject."[43]

Ohio

Findlay School District's curricula were developed using Ohio's model civics curriculum, which is based on the state standards.[44] The Findlay district social studies coordinator leads the process of rewriting each course's curriculum, bringing together teams of 6 to 25 K-12 teachers to work with him. District administrators and teachers work to ensure that the district's civics and social studies curricula are coordinated between grades so that, for example, history courses eventually teach students about all of American history, not just the Revolutionary War period. In addition, they have worked to align the district curricula with the state standards and the state assessment (which themselves are aligned statewide) and then to write proficiency objectives that go hand in hand with the district curricula.

In describing this process, the Findlay district social studies coordinator said that

> … there are one to two representatives from each grade level. There are usually four to six people from [the] high school [level]. Lots of times they write separately and then come together [with the other team members] to work things out. Classroom time is a huge issue, and so often history course work started with Columbus discovering America and never got past the Civil War. If we're going to repeat material, we want to know that we're doing it. So we work heavily on curriculum alignment.[45]

Teachers and administrators view this effort with varying degrees of satisfaction. For example, the Findlay district coordinator said, "We looked at the state standards, and our curriculum looks somewhat like it. However, the state standards don't deal with content."[46] One Findlay teacher said, "We tried to fit the curriculum to the [state] model, but it wasn't that useful."[47] Another teacher added, "We created a strange hybrid of our ideas and the [state] model."[48]

The Putnam County Schools received help developing a course of study and curriculum for social studies and civics from the Putnam County Educational Service Center, an office that serves all nine small school districts in the county. The course of study establishes the grade level at which social studies courses are taught and the material contained within each course. Since no school district in Putnam County has its own curriculum coordinator, the Educational Service Center coordinated the writing of the document by bringing in teachers from all nine school districts to work together on it. In addition, a consultant from the Ohio Department of Education was brought in to help with this year-long process.[49]

The group looked extremely closely at the Ohio state social studies standards while developing the local course of study. In particular, group members used the Ohio Department of Education's *Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program* (1994) and *Resource Guide to Accompany the Model* (1996).[50] The Putnam County team developed its course of study for social studies by using the *National Standards for Civics and Government* framework as a guideline.

One of the Educational Service Center curriculum coordinators noted that, "while it is not mandated by state law that the districts must use these standards, it benefits the districts to do so because the mandated statewide assessment tests are based on the standards."[51] In other words, Ohio gives districts the freedom to create curricula but provides support for districts and assesses students based on the state standards. A Putnam County elementary school teacher conveyed this feeling when she told project researchers, "The standards and course of study are clear enough that I know what they want me to teach but vague enough that I can do what I want in the classroom."[52]

Texas

Texas recently implemented its new, detailed standards, namely, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). TEKS documents clearly delineate the subjects that should be taught in Texas school districts. District adoption of TEKS is required, reflecting Texas' relatively greater degree of centralized state control.

Since the adoption of TEKS, school districts, including the McAllen Independent School District, have focused their efforts on making sure that teachers are familiar with the content of TEKS. Teachers are required to use the standards to guide their lesson plans, although (unlike Florida) there appears to be no formal process of explicitly linking lesson plans to elements in the standards. In the 1998-99 school year, McAllen teachers aligned their lesson plans to the state standards to ensure that all TEKS content would be covered.[53]

The McAllen district currently is engaged in a more comprehensive, districtwide effort to update all its curricula to match the new state standards. Its Results-Based Educational Models initiative is a three- to five-year, $21 million project to network every classroom and campus in the district and then to place online both the standards and the associated curriculum frameworks. However, this process has been delayed; reasons cited include a more immediate priority of preparing students for statewide testing in reading and mathematics, as well as continued teacher resistance to making curricula even more uniform throughout the district.[54]

Conclusion

Although some of the seven states centralize education decision making and others are more locally controlled, most of the districts examined use their state standards as the basis for their district curricula. Civics curriculum development at the district level is grounded on state standards and typically includes teachers, school and district administrators, state education officials, community leaders, and parents working in collaboration to ensure that district curricula meet both state expectations and local needs.

Teachers' Familiarity with District and School Civic Education Policies

As teachers participate in curriculum development at the district level, it is necessary but not sufficient that they be familiar with the civics content in state standards and its relationship to district curriculum development. In addition, they should understand and be aware of school district and school policies that shape civics curricula. However, this often is not the case.

When asked whether their particular district's school board has adopted a policy regarding civic education curricula, many teachers reported that they are not aware of any such board action, while other teachers' responses often were contradictory. Table 6.3 summarizes these responses.

All but one of the responding teachers in San Jose reported that they do not know whether their school board has adopted a policy regarding civic education curricula. More than 50 percent of the teachers in each of Niskayuna and Austin reported they do not know, either. On the other hand, all responding teachers in Raymond and Putnam County reported that they know whether or not their school districts have policies regarding civic education curricula. Whether coincidentally or not, these are the two smallest districts surveyed. Although several teachers in each of Long Beach, San Jose, Munster, and Lincoln responded that they do not know whether their school boards have adopted policies on civic education curricula, all teachers in these districts who are aware of school board action agree in their responses, suggesting effective communication between school boards and teachers in these districts. However, teachers in Raymond and Albany are evenly split over their districts' policies, suggesting a lack of effective communication in these communities. Thus, it is reasonable to wonder how teachers can adequately teach civics content consistent with school board civic education policies if the teachers are not receiving clear signals about these policies.

Table 6.3
Familiarity of Secondary Social Studies Teachers with Civic Education Curricular Policies Adopted by Their District School Boards

		Number of Teacher Responses (percentage)					
State	School District	Aware That School Board Has Adopted Policy on Civic Education Curricula		Aware That School Board Has Not Adopted Policy on Civic Education Curricula		Not Aware Whether School Board Has Adopted Policy on Civic Education Curricula	
California	Long Beach	2	(67%)	0		1	(33%)
	San Jose	0		1	(17%)	5	(83%)
Florida	Miami-Dade County	21	(84%)	1	(4%)	3	(12%)
	Leon County	6	(55%)	2	(18%)	3	(27%)
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh	5	(36%)	3	(21%)	6	(43%)
	Munster	4	(67%)	0		2	(33%)
Nebraska	Lincoln	25	(69%)	0		11	(31%)
	Raymond	1	(50%)	1	(50%)	0	
New York	Albany	2	(29%)	2	(29%)	3	(43%)
	Niskayuna	2	(13%)	4	(27%)	9	(60%)
Ohio	Findlay	7	(78%)	1	(11%)	1	(11%)
	Putnam County	4	(80%)	1	(20%)	0	
Texas	Austin	20	(42%)	2	(4%)	26	(54%)
	McAllen	7	(54%)	3	(23%)	3	(23%)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Secondary social studies teachers also expressed uncertainty about whether their schools have adopted policies regarding civic education curricula. However, table 6.4 shows that the surveyed teachers are generally more aware of their school policies relating to civic education than they are of their school board policies (see table 6.3).

Teachers in the two New York districts reported the highest level of uncertainty among the 14 districts about the existence of school policies regarding civic education curricula, with 40 percent of responding teachers stating that they are not aware of such policies. Teachers in Long Beach and Raymond reported that they know whether their schools have policies regarding civic education curricula.

Table 6.4
Familiarity of Secondary Social Studies Teachers with Their Schools' Civic Education Curricular Policies

		Number of Teacher Responses (percentage)					
State	**School District**	**Aware That School Has Adopted Policy on Civic Education Curricula**		**Aware That School Has Not Adopted Policy on Civic Education Curricula**		**Not Aware Whether School Has Adopted Policy on Civic Education Curricula**	
California	Long Beach	2	(67%)	1	(33%)	0	
	San Jose	2	(33%)	1	(17%)	3	(50%)
Florida	Miami-Dade County	16	(64%)	4	(16%)	5	(20%)
	Leon County	6	(55%)	2	(18%)	3	(27%)
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh	6	(43%)	6	(43%)	2	(14%)
	Munster	4	(67%)	1	(17%)	1	(17%)
Nebraska	Lincoln	18	(50%)	11	(31%)	7	(19%)
	Raymond	2	(100%)	0		0	
New York	Albany	2	(29%)	2	(29%)	3	(43%)
	Niskayuna	5	(33%)	3	(20%)	7	(47%)
Ohio	Findlay	4	(44%)	1	(11%)	4	(44%)
	Putnam County	3	(60%)	1	(20%)	1	(20%)
Texas	Austin	21	(44%)	7	(15%)	20	(42%)
	McAllen	7	(54%)	2	(15%)	4	(31%)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Attention to Civics Content in Courses at the District Level

Every school district offers a different mix of social studies and related courses that have civics content, reflecting each district's distinctive civics and social studies curricula (and its state's social studies standards). This section examines this mix of courses in the 14 districts, the relative priority given by secondary social studies teachers in these districts to the components of civic education when they teach civics content, and the classroom attention given by these teachers to civics content relative to other topics in their social studies courses.

District Courses with Civics Content

Table 6.5 shows that 6 of the 14 districts examined in this project offer courses entitled Civics or Citizenship, while only 3 of these districts require community service as a graduation requirement.[55] Florida is the only one of these seven states in which both districts offer a civics or citizenship course, while Miami-Dade County and Lincoln are the only districts among the 14 that both offer such a course and require community service. It is notable that neither of the districts in either of the two (of the seven) states that report having a statewide voluntary community service requirement (namely, Indiana and Ohio—see table 2.11) has a community service requirement.

Table 6.5
District Civics or Citizenship Courses and Community Service Requirements

State	District	Civics or Citizenship Course Offered	Community Service Requirement
California	Long Beach	X	
	San Jose		X
Florida	Miami-Dade County	X	X
	Leon County	X	
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh		
	Munster	X	
Nebraska	Lincoln	X	X
	Raymond		
New York	Albany		
	Niskayuna		
Ohio	Findlay		
	Putnam County	X	
Texas	Austin		
	McAllen		

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

Table 6.6 shows, for each of the 14 districts, which of eight social studies courses that have civics content are offered in the district. The only two courses reported as being offered in all 14 districts are U.S. history and government. World history is offered in 11 of the districts; social sciences/studies in 9; economics in 7; geography in 7; civics or citizenship in 6; and business/law in 5. Clearly, a civics or citizenship course is one of the least frequently offered social studies courses in these 14 districts, reflecting the generally low priority given to civic education by districts and district social studies coordinators in determining which social studies courses their schools offer.

None of the 14 districts offers a social studies course with civics content in all eight of the course categories in table 6.6. Indeed, only Miami-Dade County and Austin offer courses with civics content in seven of these social studies areas. Evansville-Vanderburgh, Raymond, Albany, and Findlay offer courses with civics content in only four of these eight social studies areas, which is the least number of course areas covered by any of the 14 districts. Note, however, that a district may offer more than one course in one of these categories; for example, some districts offer several electives in the general area of social sciences/studies. The sections that follow elaborate upon tables 6.5 and 6.6 by describing the social studies courses having civics content offered by each of the 14 districts, as well as district community service requirements, if any.

Table 6.6
Districts' Social Studies Courses with Civics Content

State	District	Civics or Citizenship	U. S. History	World History	Government	Economics	Geography	Social Sciences/ Studies	Business/ Law
California	Long Beach	X	X	X	X				X
	San Jose	X	X		X		X	X	
Florida	Miami-Dade Co.	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	Leon County	X	X	X	X		X		X
Indiana	Evansville-Vand.		X	X	X			X	
	Munster	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Nebraska	Lincoln	X	X	X	X		X	X	
	Raymond		X		X	X			X
New York	Albany		X	X	X			X	
	Niskayuna		X	X	X	X		X	
Ohio	Findlay		X		X		X	X	
	Putnam County		X	X	X	X		X	
Texas	Austin		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	McAllen		X	X	X	X	X		

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

California

Since a district's curriculum is greatly influenced by the state standards frameworks in California, so is a district's course work. The frameworks provide the basis for social science courses by requiring that U.S. history and geography be covered in grades 5, 8, and 11. In 9th grade, California requires that students take two semesters of social studies elective courses. In 12th grade, students are required to take a one-semester government course.[56] The San Jose district reflects these requirements in its many courses that have civics content. Its schools teach U.S. history in 8th grade and government in 12th grade, and a civics class is also taught.[57] At the elementary school level, social studies topics are addressed. For example, the 3rd-grade social studies emphasis in California is on community.[58] In addition, community service is required for graduation. Long Beach schools teach a course called Civics, and civics topics also are taught in U.S. government; U.S. history; civil and criminal law; and world history, government, and American politics. In addition, community service is required in some schools.[59]

Florida

Florida, like California, requires that its districts adhere closely to the state standards, and this requirement is reflected in district curricula. Miami-Dade County requires that civics content be addressed in every grade between kindergarten and 12th, except 10th grade, just as the state standards do. This school district does have a course entitled Civics. The following social studies courses that contain civics content are required:

- Kindergarten—My Family and Others
- Grade 1—Families Near and Far

- Grade 2—Communities
- Grade 3—Our Cultures
- Grade 4—Florida
- Grade 5—U.S. History and Geography
- Grade 6—Geography
- Grade 7—Civics
- Grade 8—U.S. History
- Grade 9—World History
- Grade 11—World History
- Grade 12—American Government/Economics.[60]

Miami-Dade County offers four law-related education courses.[61] In addition, the district coordinates a character education program for all schools and all grade levels. This program offers " lessons and activities designed to reinforce the nine core values adopted by the School Board in 1995"; these lessons include civics content.[62] Finally, the curriculum in Miami-Dade County includes a requirement for students to participate in community service in order for them to graduate. The requirement supports the district goal of promoting civic participation by students.[63] This strong response to including civics content in multiple courses is consistent with the earlier finding (table 6.3) that Miami-Dade County teachers reported the highest awareness of district policies regarding civic education curricula among all 14 districts.

Leon County schools also teach a course entitled Civics and teach several other courses with civics content, including U.S. government, U.S. history, world history, world culture geography, and public speaking and debate. This district does not require community service of students for them to graduate.[64]

Indiana

In Indiana, Munster high school courses that include civics content are civics, economics, U.S. history, government, sociology, and modern world history.[65] Community service is not required for graduation. The Evansville-Vanderburgh district does not offer a course entitled Civics; however, civics content is addressed in social studies, government, American history, world history, psychology, and sociology. Community service is not required for graduation.[66]

Nebraska

In Nebraska, Lincoln's curriculum was developed so that students have to take five credit hours of 20th-century American history, five hours of world history, ten hours of government, and five hours of citizenship issues.[67] Other courses, such as world geography, social studies, and ancient history, also incorporate civics content. In addition, students in Lincoln are required to do community service in order to graduate.

There is no separate civics course in Raymond, but civics content is included in such courses as American government, American history, business law, economics, and an introduction to business.[68] Raymond does not require community service, although most students engage in some type of community service activity.

New York

New York requires social studies courses for grades 7 through 12, with each course providing civics content. While the names of these courses may vary slightly from district to district (particularly in the 12th grade, when students are not subject to state Regents exams), the courses are essentially the same throughout the state.

- Grade 7—United States History
- Grade 8—New York History
- Grade 9—Global History
- Grade 10—Global History
- Grade 11—United States History
- Grade 12—Economics and Government.[69]

While neither Albany nor Niskayuna offers a course entitled Civics or Citizenship, Niskayuna's Crossroads curriculum does contain a great deal of civics material. Although they are not always labeled as "civics," the seventh- and eighth-grade history courses include civic concepts.[70] Other high school courses that include civics content in Niskayuna are U.S. History, New York History, the Flexible Instructional Period, World Cultures, Global History, AP European History, Economics, Sociology, and U.S. Government.[71] Courses in Albany that include civics content are American Government, U.S. History, Honors American History, Global Studies, and Social Studies.[72] Neither the Albany district nor the Niskayuna district requires community service for graduation.[73]

Ohio

The Putnam County Schools offers the following course of study for 7th grade through 12th grade:

- Grade 7—World Studies from Prehistory-1800
- Grade 8—U.S. Studies from 1750-1900, including significant civics content
- Grade 9—World Studies from 1800-1900
- Grade 11—U.S./World Studies from 1900-Present
- Grade 12—a semester each of Government and Economics.[74]

Tenth graders in Putnam County are free to choose a social studies elective, and some schools teach a civics course. Putnam County does not have a community service requirement for graduation.[75]

The Findlay School District does not offer a course entitled Civics or Citizenship, but it does include civics content in American history, American political systems, government, sociology, psychology, and economics courses.[76] Courses in government and the American political system are required for graduation in Findlay, and the district suggests that students take four years of social studies if they are college bound.[77] Findlay does not require community service for graduation.[78]

Texas

McAllen does not offer a course called Civics or Citizenship, and neither does Austin. However, more than ten courses in Austin do include civics content; these are courses in government, social studies, world geography, sociology, U.S. history, AP government, Texas history, project law, American cultures, economics, and world history. Courses in McAllen that include civics content are world geography, U.S. history, world history, U.S. government, and economics.[79] No community service is required of students in either Texas district.

Teacher Attention to the Three Components of Civic Education

In its best form, civic education includes several components: civic knowledge, civic intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions.[80]

Secondary social studies teachers in the 14 districts were asked what priority they give to each of these components of civic education. Table 6.7 displays the teachers' collective responses to this question along a scale of " 1" (high priority) to " 7" (no priority).

Table 6.7
Priority Given to Components of Civic Education by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

	Number of Teachers (percentage)							
Priority Level	**Knowledge**		**Intellectual Skills**		**Participatory Skills**		**Dispositions**	
1—High priority	59	(31%)	62	(33%)	68	(36%)	37	(20%)
2	56	(30%)	53	(28%)	50	(26%)	44	(24%)
3	25	(13%)	31	(16%)	29	(15%)	42	(23%)
4—Some priority	24	(13%)	25	(13%)	20	(11%)	33	(18%)
5	15	(8%)	5	(3%)	13	(7%)	15	(8%)
6	4	(2%)	6	(3%)	5	(3%)	4	(2%)
7—No priority	6	(3%)	6	(3%)	5	(3%)	6	(3%)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

With respect to the priority levels in table 6.7, consider levels " 1" and " 2" as " highest priority" ; levels " 3," " 4," and " 5" as " middle priority" ; and levels " 6" and " 7" as " lowest priority." It is striking that the percentages of responding teachers who reported giving " highest priority," " middle priority," and " lowest priority" to each of civic knowledge, civic intellectual skills, and civic participatory skills are almost identical (i.e., 61-62 percent, 32-34 percent, and 5-6 percent, respectively). Responding teachers reported giving significantly lower priority to civic dispositions. This lower priority given to civic dispositions also is clear, for example, from the Competency-Based

Curriculum in Miami-Dade County; this program combines the acquisition of civic knowledge and skills with opportunities to apply democratic beliefs through civic participation, yet makes no mention of civic dispositions.[81]

These findings regarding the relative low priority given civic dispositions by social studies teachers are consistent with the findings in chapter 3 that indicate state standards often give little attention to the civic dispositions component of civic education. When social studies standards do not promote civic dispositions, civics and social studies curricula and courses—and thus social studies teachers—seldom will, either.

Teacher Attention to Civics in Social Studies Classes

An area of interest and concern with respect to school and classroom civic education practices is the level of teacher attention to civics compared to teacher attention to other subjects in social studies classes. For example, do teachers give less attention and time to civics than they do to subject areas that are assessed by the state or for which district standards exist? Or is civics taught with the same or greater level of attention as other social studies topics?

In many of the states and districts examined, civics takes a back seat to subjects such as reading and math, especially if the latter two subjects are subject to an assessment and civics is not. The only state whose survey respondents do not believe civics receives less teacher attention compared to other subjects is Ohio, which has an assessment test for citizenship.

Among all secondary social studies teachers responding to the survey question about how much time they spend on civics content each week in their classes, 4 percent reported spending no time; 33 percent, less than one hour per week; 25 percent, between one and two hours per week; 15 percent, between two and four hours per week; and 18 percent, more than four hours per week.[82] In all, 62 percent of the responding teachers reported they spend less than two hours per week on civics—a disappointingly small amount of time.

The teacher survey responses reveal reasons why teachers believe they cannot spend more time on civics in their social studies classes. More than 55 percent of respondents cited the need to spend time on other subjects as the number one reason for not spending more time on civics, and 13 percent noted that a lack of resources was an impediment to giving more attention to civics. Interestingly, about 16 percent of respondents reported that nothing is preventing them from spending more class time on civics.[83] Thus, classroom time spent on other subjects need not always be an impediment to addressing civics topics adequately.

In Texas, responding social studies teachers in McAllen reported feeling pressured for time to teach civics; they are pressured both by the amount of information they have to cover within civics and by the demands they feel from the time needed to cover other subject areas and special programs.[84] Another time-related issue is that many civics courses are only one semester long, but, as one teacher said, "the book is written for a year[-long course]."[85] Therefore, teachers can either rush through material or skip large sections. In Texas, these course decisions are made at the state level.[86]

Students in Texas also noted the lack of time for civics. One student said, "The CCE material is so easy to understand. But civics needs to be a year-long course, rather than just a semester. There's too much to cover."[87] The McAllen district coordinator for social studies echoed this sentiment about the lack of time: "What keeps civics from being taught is time. So many things are already prescheduled."[88] As these comments suggest, the average number of hours of civics taught per week in Texas is extremely low. In Austin, teachers responding to the survey reported spending, on average, only 1.87 hours per week on civics; the corresponding time reported in McAllen was approximately the same, namely, 1.92 hours per week. Teachers' responses ranged from zero time to a maximum of five hours per week.[89] Austin teachers explained that their lack of attention to civics results from several factors, including the requirement that advanced placement (AP) classes have two teachers, the lack of district or school administrative directives to spend more time on civics, the existence of an administrative directive not to spend time on civics, and the fact that civics is not a separate subject.[90]

Relative to responding teachers in the other six states, Indiana teacher respondents reported spending an average number of hours on civics; Evansville-Vanderburgh teachers reported spending an average of 1.86 hours per week and Munster teachers an average of 2.25 hours per week. As in other states, one reason offered by Indiana teachers for the lack of civics emphasis in classrooms is the amount of other social studies material to cover.[91]

New York teachers also reported a low number of average hours spent on civics, with Albany teachers reporting 1.33 hours per week and Niskayuna teachers reporting 1.67 hours per week.[92] Reasons given for this lack of emphasis include time constraints, a comprehensive social studies curriculum, and the Regents exams.

Florida teachers reported spending an average amount of time each week on civics. In Miami-Dade County, teachers reported spending an average of 2.42 hours on civics per week, while Leon County teachers reported spending 2.89 hours per week. Factors cited by teachers as impeding the teaching of civics include lack of funding and the requirements of AP history.[93]

In California, the current education priority is reading, and enormous amounts of state resources are being dedicated to it. Reading is such a dominant focus that at times civics is excluded from the curriculum, because reading is assessed by the state and civics is not. Nevertheless, despite the state's emphasis on reading, California teachers reported spending between two and four hours per week on civics, higher than the average time spent by all survey respondents.[94] One key solution to this problem, especially at the elementary level, is integrating civics into the language arts curriculum.[95]

Since there is a citizenship proficiency test in Ohio, Findlay School District teachers do not believe that civics takes a back seat to other subjects.[96] In addition, teachers reported that there is enough time in the school year to cover all the requirements in Ohio's citizenship standards. Nevertheless, some Ohio teachers also reported that pressure to teach other subjects keeps them from being able to spend the amount of time on civics that they want to spend.[97] Two Findlay teachers surveyed said that they spend less than one hour per week on civics; four teachers spend between one to two hours on civics per week; and three teachers spend between two and four hours on civics per week.[98] Two teachers cited as a major impediment to spending more time on civics their short (40 minutes) class periods. The average number of civics hours taught per week in Findlay was reported to be 2.33.[99] The average of hours reportedly spent per week on civics in Putnam County, on the other hand, was the highest of all districts surveyed, namely, 4.4 hours per week.[100]

Nebraska has no statewide civics assessment, but its teachers also reported spending a high number of hours per week on civics. Lincoln teachers reported spending an average of 3.32 hours per week. They cited several reasons for not spending more time on civics, including short (49 minutes) class periods and a lack of teacher preparation to teach civics. The teachers in Raymond reported spending 3.5 hours per week on civics. They believe that civics is treated fairly in relation to other subjects, with one teacher responding that it is "the most important" subject.[101]

Conclusions

A disappointing number of teachers are somewhat or completely unfamiliar with their states' standards. Only one-quarter of responding teachers reported being extremely familiar with their states' standards. One-half reported being somewhat familiar, with one-quarter reporting no familiarity at all with the standards. Teachers also are unaware or confused about district and school policies regarding civic education. Many teachers are not aware whether their district school boards or schools have adopted policies regarding civic education curricula; other teachers' responses were contradictory.

Many districts have similar curriculum development processes, most consider state standards when creating their curricula, and many offer similar courses with civics content. In these courses, teachers generally emphasize civic dispositions less than civic knowledge, skills, and participation. Clearly, in all districts and states examined, the civic dispositions component is given attention less often and less strongly than the other components of civic education. Finally, this chapter also demonstrates that, in many states, civics takes a back seat to other subjects (e.g., reading and math), especially if these other subjects are assessed through a test and civics is not. Indeed, every state except Ohio, which has a state assessment in citizenship, has a difficult time putting civic education on equal footing with other subjects.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest steps that could be taken to improve the influence that state standards have on the teaching of civics topics.

1. *State education policymakers should ensure that state social studies standards and related policies and practices foster greater attention by school districts to civics*

content in district standards, curricula, and courses at all grade levels. State standards and policies (including standards-aligned assessments) should include a significant emphasis on civics content relative to other social studies content at all grade levels in order that districts recognize the importance the state places on civic education. If the civics content of state standards is minimal or difficult to find and use, districts will, in turn, minimize the incorporation of civics content in their curricula and courses. If social studies standards give high priority to civics, districts are much more likely to offer civics or citizenship courses, as well as to promote civics content in all social studies courses. State policymakers also should refrain from revising state standards too frequently. Although it is important that standards remain relevant and reflect current state education goals, frequent revisions lead to a lack of district attention to and understanding about the standards' civics content. Such revisions also require, in turn, that districts review and revise their civics-related standards, curricula, and courses, and this effort creates a substantial burden on many districts and their social studies teachers.

2. *State education policymakers should ensure that district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers are fully informed about the state's civic education priorities and the civics content of state standards and related policies.* Many states integrate civics content throughout their social studies standards without regard for ensuring that district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers understand how the standards' civics content can link to district curricula and courses. For example, state departments of education could, in collaboration with CCE and its state coordinators, develop and disseminate materials to districts and teachers that identify potential linkages between the standards' civics content and district course content. These materials should promote teacher initiative and innovation, as well as articulate the "crosswalks" between standards' elements and course elements. Communication of these materials should be carried out through a variety of ways, including published documents, teacher professional development programs, and electronic means (e.g., state listservs for social studies teachers of courses with civics content, moderated by the state's social studies supervisor or CCE's state coordinator).

3. *State education policymakers should ensure that district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers understand how civics topics can be taught not only in social studies courses but also in reading, writing, and other courses.* There is great value in fostering greater understanding of what it means to be an informed and effective citizen. But citizenship education should not and need not be relegated to a narrow segment of the curriculum labeled "social studies" or even "civics." State policymakers should ensure that school district administrators, school boards, and teachers understand the opportunities for incorporating civics content and materials into reading, writing, and other courses. For example, students can learn about the U.S. Constitution or foreign affairs while improving their reading and writing skills. State policymakers should work with district educators to develop and disseminate materials showing the integration of civics content into core subject areas (e.g., inexpensive packets of examples showing ways in which teachers throughout the

state have successfully incorporated civics content into reading and writing assignments at various grade levels).

4. *District social studies coordinators, in collaboration with CCE's state and congressional district coordinators, should ensure that school board members understand the significance and importance of K-12 civic education for the local community and the state, as well as adopt and communicate effectively district policies that promote greater teacher attention to civics curricula and course content.* School board members may lack the opportunities or time to become well informed about the critical importance of civics courses and content to enhancing the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions of American youth. District coordinators should seek opportunities to provide board members with this understanding, as well as to emphasize the importance of board policies that reaffirm for principals, teachers, parents, students, community leaders, and local citizens the centrality of civics in K-12 curricula and courses. In addition, coordinators should ensure that board-adopted civics policies are communicated promptly and clearly to teachers, which in many districts is not now occurring. District coordinators and board members also need to ensure that, within the totality of district curricular policies, teachers have sufficient time to teach civics and to direct complementary extracurricular activities.

5. *School district administrators and school board members should foster, consistent with state standards, the development of a district social studies curriculum that includes a high school-level civics course covering the civics topics in the national standards framework in a thorough and balanced manner, as well as gives attention to civics content at all grade levels.* State social studies standards and district curricula generally emphasize student learning in the areas of U.S. and world history, as well as government, with civics (and other social studies subject areas) receiving lesser attention. In addition to adopting and implementing curricular policies that promote civics courses, district administrators and board members should support policies and practices that assess students' civic education broadly and meaningfully, foster the classroom use of effective civics instructional materials, increase attention to civics content in teacher certification and professional development, and promote students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions at all grade levels.

6. *School district administrators and school board members should consider, working in collaboration with CCE's state and congressional district coordinators, the development and implementation of district standards in civics and government that complement and reinforce the civics content of state standards.* Particular attention should be given in civics and other social studies courses to the civics topics included in the National Standards for Civics and Government framework. Even in states with strong centralized education decision making, there are opportunities for districts to build on the civics content in state standards through an even greater emphasis on civics content in district standards developed with the active involvement of district teachers and citizens—and states should encourage such district initiatives. If the United States is to reverse the trends that show an increasing lack of civic literacy and civic participation by American youth and young adults, states must provide

encouragement and a statewide civics framework—but school districts, their administrators and board members, teachers, community leaders, university professors of education, and other constituencies of the public schools must take the lead in transforming the civic education of students.

7. *School district administrators and school board members should encourage teachers and principals to implement civic education policies and practices, extracurricular as well as curricular and co-curricular, that reinforce and expand the state's and district's civic standards, curricula, and related policies.* District administrators and board members must ensure that district civics priorities and policies are communicated effectively to schools and teachers and also that school principals effectively communicate school-level civics policies and practices to teachers. District administrators should work with school principals and teachers to ensure that parents, community leaders, and other school constituencies fully understand not only the critical importance of civic education for students at all grade levels but also its importance for the community itself. Many parents and other adults have an incomplete and negative view of what "civics" is; thus, district and school leaders must communicate effectively both within and outside the schools the components of civic education and their centrality to students' preparation for effective and informed citizenship.

Notes

[1] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Jeffrey Eiker, Teacher, Haskett Middle School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[2] Interview by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Doug Fix, High School Social Studies Teacher, School Town of Munster, Munster, Indiana, January 22, 1999.

[3] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[4] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Pat Smith, Middle School Curriculum Coordinator; and Scott Hummel, Secondary School Curriculum Coordinator, Putnam County Educational Service Center, Ottawa, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[5] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Dale Rasmussen, Social Studies Teacher; and Susan Schraeder, Current Issues Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[6] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Bruce Long, Social Studies Developer, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[7] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Annette Boyd Pitts, Executive Director, Florida Law-Related Education Association, Inc., Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[8] Interviews by Nicoletta Ràggi and Dana Williams with High School Teachers, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[9] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[10] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[11] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Karen Haupt, Teacher, Haskett Middle School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[12] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Dan Murray, Teacher, Albany High School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[13] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Mark Miller, District Curriculum Coordinator, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[14] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with David Peterson, Teacher, Albany High School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[15] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[16] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with John Doyle, Director, Division of Social Sciences, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida, February 23, 1999.

[17] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[18] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Catherine Graham, Manager, Curriculum and Learning Resources, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with High School Social Studies Teachers, Gunderson High School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 24, 1999.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Linda Mehlbrech, History/Social Studies Curriculum Leader, Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, California, February 25, 1999.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Elementary School Teachers, W.T. Moore Elementary School, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[26] Long interview.

[27] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with High School Teachers, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Elementary School Teachers, W.T. Moore Elementary School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[30] Doyle interview.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Middle School Teachers, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, Evansville, Indiana, January 20, 1999.

[33] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Karen Stanley, Social Studies Consultant, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Teachers, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, District Office, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Donna Cavallano, Middle School Teacher, Iroquois Middle School, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 8, 1999.

[40] Interviews by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with High School Teachers, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 8, 1999.

[41] Interviews by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Middle School Teachers, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[42] Interviews by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with High School Teachers, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[45] Miller interview.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[48] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[49] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[50] Smith and Hummel interviews.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Elementary School Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[53] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Reynaldo G. Garza Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[54] Ibid.; and interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Teachers, Memorial, McAllen, and Nikki Rowe High Schools, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[55] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[56] California Department of Education, *History/Social Science Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade: 1997 Updated Edition* (Sacramento, Calif., 1997), pp. 50-56, 68-83, 93-107.

[57] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[58] Graham interview.

[59] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[60] Miami-Dade County Public Schools, *Catch the Spirit for Social Studies: Preparing Citizens for the 21st Century*, Miami, Fla., n.d., n.p. (brochure)

[61] Doyle interview.

[62] Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Division of Social Sciences, "Voter Education, Civic Education, and the Competency-Based Curriculum" (paper submitted to school board, Miami, Florida, July 16, 1998), p. 2.

[63] Ibid., p. 1.

[64] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Stanley interview.

[68] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[69] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Bob Van Amburgh, District Social Studies Coordinator, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[70] Interviews by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Middle School Teachers, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[71] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[75] Ibid.

[76] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

[80] National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (Washington, D.C., 1998), pp.17-18.

[81] Doyle interview.

[82] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Leonelo H. Gonzalez Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[85] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Teachers, Memorial, McAllen, and Nikki Rowe High Schools, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Students, Memorial High School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[88] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Mick West, Coordinator for Social Studies, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[89] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Graham interview.

[96] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[97] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Rasmussen and Schrader interviews.

Chapter 7. Influences of Instructional Materials on Civic Education at the District Level

The term "instructional materials" is used to describe all materials used by teachers in the preparation and presentation of educational materials to students. These materials may be used in the classroom or outside the classroom. They may include various types of publications and printed matter, as well as wall posters, videotapes, games, assignments, plans for hands-on activities, and even state standards and district curricula. The most traditional and widely used instructional materials are, of course, the standard textbooks. However, a variety of supplemental materials, including the publications of CCE and other organizations, are widely used as well.

This chapter examines the use of civic education instructional materials by the 14 selected school districts to address the civics content of curricula and courses. It looks at how these districts choose textbooks for these courses, how teachers use these textbooks, how teachers use supplemental civic education materials, and how Internet and World Wide Web technology is and could be used to improve civics instruction.

This chapter relies on findings arising from on-site visits by project researchers to 13 of these districts, during which researchers observed civics classes and met with state and district social studies coordinators, classroom teachers, students, and others (e.g., university professors of education). It also incorporates the results of surveys that were distributed to district social studies coordinators and secondary social studies teachers in all 14 of these districts. (The section entitled "Framework for Analysis and Methodology" in chapter 6 discusses these efforts at greater length.)

Choosing Textbooks for Civics Instruction

Textbooks are easily vilified, because too many people can recall sitting in classes with a teacher droning on while reading from a textbook. Although there still are teachers who employ this teaching approach and textbooks that fail to promote the higher-order thinking skills of students, textbooks can be and often are effective and stimulating instructional materials. Ideally, they provide a framework for a large portion of the information and insights that states and districts believe students should learn and that teachers seek to impart to students. They interpret and communicate the essential elements of state and district standards, curriculum frameworks, and curricula. A quality textbook often is the primary document teachers use to plan their courses and frame their lessons. As a New York public school teacher advised us, "Don't waste time in curricular involvement. The textbook is basically the curriculum.... The textbook drives what goes on in the classroom."[1]

States and districts have varying degrees of freedom in choosing which textbooks to use to address civics topics. Some states, such as Texas and Florida, have very centralized textbook-adoption policies and procedures. Texas, for example, provides specific funding to school districts for textbook purchases but only for textbooks approved by the state. Other states have more flexible policies, providing teachers with limited funds to purchase any textbooks they choose for their courses. Alternatively, textbook adoption and purchasing may be decentralized to the school district or the school level. The following sections show how districts choose their civics-related textbooks and how these processes are influenced by their states' standards and related policies.

In Florida, Miami-Dade County Public Schools participates in the statewide process to select state-approved textbooks. Only six or seven of the state's 67 school districts are invited to participate in this process, and because the Miami-Dade County district is so large and so important it is usually included. Through the state process, a master list of a few books is approved for each course. Each district then may further reduce the list of state-approved books for a course to a smaller number of district-approved books for that course, if the district desires. The state will pay for the purchase of state-approved books selected by schools and teachers, but schools can order any instructional materials (including nonapproved textbooks) they want using nonstate funds. A particular civics-related problem for Miami-Dade County schools is that the district is one of the few districts in Florida to require seventh-grade civics, but the state has never approved a middle school civics book. Thus, Miami-Dade County schools have to provide their own funding to purchase materials for this course. Moreover, the selection is limited, since book publishers generally decline to produce materials for courses that are not required statewide. Factors such as these in textbook-adoption states clearly create obstacles for districts and schools interested in offering civics instruction.

California is another textbook-adoption state; textbooks available for adoption by a California school district must be on the California state matrix of approved books. The San Jose Unified School District adopts textbooks for grades K-8 every seven years. High schools in the district select their own textbooks, using textbook guidelines and criteria (consistent with state guidelines) adopted by the district's board of education.[2] A team of teachers makes the selections, with the district's manager of curriculum and learning resources overseeing the process.[3] With high school textbook adoption dependent on the schools and not the district, no regular adoption cycle exists. At one San Jose high school, for example, the American government textbook dates back to 1986.[4] In comparison, Long Beach bases its textbook adoptions on the state's frameworks and standards.[5]

Ohio's process is different. Findlay School District, for example, has a social studies committee that meets every three years to select textbooks aligned with the state's standards and the district's curriculum. This process is the traditional way in which districts choose textbooks.[6] Three or four Findlay teachers serve as members of the district committee to review possible textbooks.[7] The district coordinator believes that "once we have decided on the course of study, it is easy to choose textbooks. We pick a book with the [course] objectives in mind."[8] The civics textbooks used in Findlay High School are published by Harcourt Brace/Holt, Rinehart and Winston and by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, Inc.[9]

In Putnam County, the Educational Service Center assists the county schools with book selection, as they do with curriculum development. The Educational Service Center has textbook meetings at which teachers from the county's nine school districts come together to review possible social studies (including civics) textbooks. The list of adopted textbooks has more than one choice for each course; the individual districts choose the textbooks for courses in their respective schools.[10] Publishing companies have responded to Ohio's statewide assessment tests by creating textbooks written specifically for its Citizenship Proficiency Test. One Putnam County elementary school, for example, uses a text entitled *People Together: Adventures in Time and Place*. Another Putnam County elementary school uses a textbook entitled *Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities*, which has been written to prepare sixth-grade students for the Citizenship Proficiency Test. Another elementary school textbook used in Putnam County is *Ohio's Neighbors Near and Far*.[11]

Textbook selection in Lincoln, Nebraska, as in Findlay, is part of the curriculum-writing process, with textbook decisions made at the district level. After the curriculum is written, textbooks are selected that align with it.[12] Raymond Public Schools provides each school a "fair amount of freedom" in choosing textbooks with civics content. A committee of K-12 social studies teachers meets, reviews the state frameworks/standards and the district curriculum, and then chooses books having civics content that matches the curriculum.[13]

In New York, each school district chooses its own instructional materials, with a great deal of teacher input. The standard district practice is to determine the instructional needs of the district, after which a committee of teachers reviews and selects texts. A significant problem in recent years is that, because of the consolidation of publishing companies, there have been relatively few textbooks from which to choose.[14] Niskayuna Central School District goes through a series of steps to select its textbooks. First, a textbook is identified for each course. This book is then submitted to a core team made up of parents and teachers. There is a core team for each subject area. If the core team approves the text, the book is submitted to the school board for approval. The core team must submit, with the text, an extensive report showing that the text meets certain district criteria, such as racial diversity.[15]

Textbooks are purchased every six years in the Evansville-Vanderburgh district in Indiana. The state puts together a list of acceptable textbooks from which the district chooses.[16] The district adopts textbooks based on the state proficiencies.[17]

These summaries of state selection processes affirm the influences of state standards and other policies on districts' selections of textbooks with civics content in the examined states. Teachers are active participants in these processes as well, because, as the head of a high school government department in Findlay noted, "There is lots of power in textbook selection."[18]

Using Textbooks for Civics Instruction

Secondary social studies teachers in the 14 districts reported that the selected textbooks for courses with civics content have various levels of influence on how they teach civics topics. Table 7.1 summarizes the responses of teachers surveyed.

Table 7.1
Influence of Textbooks on Secondary Social Studies Teachers' Civics Instruction

		Number of Teacher Responses (percentage)									
State	District	Substantial Influence		Some Influence		Little Influence		No Influence		Not Applicable or No Response	
California	Long Beach	2	(67)	0		1	(33)	0		0	
	San Jose	0		1	(17)	1	(17)	0		4	(67)
Florida	Miami-Dade County	3	(12)	10	(40)	6	(24)	5	(20)	1	(4)
	Leon County	0		4	(36)	2	(18)	3	(27)	2	(18)
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh	3	(21)	2	(14)	5	(36)	3	(21)	1	(7)
	Munster	0		2	(33)	1	(17)	3	(50)	0	
Nebraska	Lincoln	3	(8)	6	(17)	12	(33)	6	(17)	9	(25)
	Raymond	0		2	(100)	0		0		0	
New York	Albany	0		3	(43)	1	(14)	2	(29)	1	(14)
	Niskayuna	1	(7)	2	(13)	7	(47)	3	(20)	2	(13)
Ohio	Findlay	2	(22)	1	(11)	3	(33)	2	(22)	1	(11)
	Putnam County	2	(40)	2	(40)	1	(20)	0		0	
Texas	Austin	10	(21)	13	(27)	11	(23)	7	(15)	7	(15)
	McAllen	6	(46)	3	(23)	3	(23)	0		1	(8)
Total		120	(16)	363	(26)	155	(27)	8	(17)	25	(15)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Of the teacher respondents, 17 percent reported that the textbook used for civics content has no influence at all on their civics instruction. One teacher said, "It [the textbook] really has no effect. No book I have ever used had an emphasis on civics or altered what I do. The amount of civics my students get is largely based on my own interest in my community, my country, and the world."[19] An additional 27 percent of the responding teachers reported that the textbooks they use have little influence on their teaching of civics. Sometimes this is because they feel the text does not address civics or simply because they choose to draw ideas from a variety of sources other than the textbooks. Twenty-six percent of the respondents said the textbooks have some influence over what they teach and how they teach it, while 16 percent reported that the textbooks substantially influence their teaching of civics. Indeed, one teacher said, "The text drives the day-to-day operation of a civics class."[20]

Of the 83 teachers reporting that their textbooks have some or substantial influence on their civics instruction, more than 25 said they use the civics textbooks for the basics of civics, as a resource. One teacher said, "It [the text] provides a guideline or good outline for the course."[21] Teachers also mentioned that texts are useful for general information, to provide a general context for discussion, for sources of homework assignments, or to provide ideas for activities. One teacher said, "I make use of textbooks when they are relevant and well-developed."[22] The district social studies coordinator in McAllen was insightful when he told project researchers, "Textbooks drive the curriculum in classrooms where teachers *don't feel real comfortable.*"[23]

Four teachers said that their civics textbooks are outdated and that the books would have more influence on their civics instruction if the books were updated. One reason cited by two teachers who don't use civics textbooks at all is that such textbooks are boring: "Since we are provided with boring, outdated texts, I rely on materials and information from outside sources."[24] Two other teachers reported that their textbooks limit instruction in civic education by their poor coverage of civics. One said, "The selected textbook is poor reading and has little valuable support materials. A lack of books and student interest leads to few reading assignments."[25]

Among the factors the teachers reported that affect the usefulness of a civics text is how closely the text is aligned (or not aligned) with state standards and district curricula. Several teachers also commented that their texts do not provide civics content. In general, then, a majority of responding teachers reported that textbooks influence their civics instruction at least somewhat, although the percentage of responding teachers reporting that the textbooks have substantial influence is relatively small.[26]

High school students in the 14 districts are much less enthusiastic about their civics textbooks than are their teachers, however. A significant reason for civics textbooks' bad reputation is their misuse or overuse. As a high school senior in Munster said, "You can't just use a textbook to understand our government."[27] Similarly, a high school student in Putnam County summed up his feelings about the usefulness of all textbooks by shrugging his shoulders and stating, "A textbook is a textbook."[28] Project researchers' interviews with high school students in Putnam County provided further support for students' views about the limitations of civics textbooks. One student said, "When they [teachers] didn't just stick to the textbooks, it was better." Another said, "I like projects better than just reading the book." Another student added, "It's better if a teacher adds to the textbook."[29]

Using Supplemental Materials for Civics Instruction

Given the number and breadth of civics topics included in the *National Standards for Civics and Government* framework (table 5.1), no one textbook can cover the civics content appropriate for teachers to cover in any one course. Teachers responsible for civics instruction are well aware of this, as are their students.

The supplemental materials for civics instruction used most often by secondary social studies teachers in the 14 districts examined in this project are publications produced by the Center for Civic Education (CCE), especially materials associated with its *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* program. (See Appendix A for a summary of CCE's programs and publications.) Table 7.2 summarizes the use of CCE program materials by secondary social studies teachers in the 14 districts to supplement their civics instruction. Although a number of surveyed teachers in some of the districts did not respond (table 6.1 provides information on the number of returned surveys in each district), about three-fourths of the teachers responding reported that they use *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution*. The following sections examine this use of CCE and other supplemental civics materials in each of the seven states, using the teacher responses summarized in table 7.2 and the responses to the LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators (see Appendix F).

Table 7.2
Use of Supplemental Civics Materials by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

		Number of Teacher Responses (percentage)							
State	**District**	***We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution***		***We the People... Project Citizen***		**Other**		**Not Applicable or No Response**	
California	Long Beach	1	(33)	0		2	(67)	1	(33)
	San Jose	0		0		0		6	(100)
Florida	Miami-Dade County	10	(40)	4	(16)	1	(2)	14	(56)
	Leon County	1	(9)	0		0		10	(91)
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh	7	(50)	3	(21)	1	(7)	5	(36)
	Munster	6	(100)	0		0		0	
Nebraska	Lincoln	21	(58)	13	(36)	2	(6)	12	(33)
	Raymond	0		0		1	(50)	1	(50)
New York	Albany	0		0		1	(14)	6	(86)
	Niskayuna	6	(40)	4	(27)	0		7	(47)
Ohio	Findlay	6	(67)	2	(22)	0		3	(33)
	Putnam County	1	(20)	0		2	(40)	3	(60)
Texas	Austin	11	(23)	5	(10)	6	(13)	29	(60)
	McAllen	5	(38)	1	(16)	2	(9)	7	(52)
Total		196	(38)	40	(16)	65	(9)	384	(52)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding. The number of responses in each row do not add up to the total number of survey responses listed in table 6.1, because respondents could indicate more than one type of supplemental material.

Particularly striking about the use of CCE materials is the response they generate from students. For example, project researchers met with high school students in Texas and Indiana who are using parts of the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* curriculum in their social studies courses. In Indiana, a student told us, "What we learned [with the *We The People* curriculum] you can't learn from a textbook. You have to discuss and argue about the issues."[30] A McAllen student in a class using *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* stated quite powerfully, "We learned the same things in this class as in other civics classes, but this class instilled passion and belief." Another McAllen student added, " What I've learned from *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* is going to help in business. I've learned that monarchies don't work. You can't just rule. You have to treat everyone fair. Even in big corporations, you have [need for] a government. So what we've learned applies to business. And the teamwork I've learned will help, too."[31] Project researchers heard equally favorable comments from many other students. This is powerful anecdotal evidence that a good, participatory civics curriculum can have a very positive and effective influence on students' civic education.

In Lincoln, one secondary social studies teacher reported that he has his best success teaching civics through a variety of materials; he takes what is useful from many programs, among which are CCE materials, Close Up Foundation materials, newspapers, and the Choices Curriculum from Brown University. He extensively uses *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution*, which he first used in 1987. Ever since his civics class won the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* national mock hearing competition in 1989, his civics students have been "hooked" on the use of this CCE material and its associated competition.[32] Indeed, the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* texts from CCE are now one of the materials ordered by the Lincoln district for use in all civics classes.[33] Many teachers in Lincoln also use newspapers and magazines to supplement or replace textbooks; the district provides money to purchase such items.[34] Raymond receives supplemental civics materials from a variety of outside sources, including CCE, Close Up Foundation, State Farm Corporation, and Junior Achievement; for example, Junior Achievement provides books and other materials to implement a business development project that is part of the district's civics program.[35]

In Miami-Dade County, almost one-half of the teachers responding to the project survey reported that they or other teachers in their schools use CCE's *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* materials to supplement civics textbooks. One teacher also reported using Student Vote as a supplementary curriculum-based program.[36] A significant supplemental source in Leon County Public Schools is the local newspaper, the *Tallahassee Democrat,* which runs workshops for teachers on how to use newspapers in the classroom and provides guidebooks and resource books for the classroom. According to the community relations manager for the *Tallahassee Democrat*, ten percent of Leon County teachers receive a weekly newspaper in their classrooms.[37] Both teachers[38] and students[39] mentioned favorably the use of newspapers in the classroom to enhance their understanding of civic education.

In Ohio, two-thirds of the nine secondary social studies teacher respondents in Findlay reported that *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* is used in their schools, with *We the People... Project Citizen* used by two teachers.[40] Teachers in this district also use videos and supplemental history books.[41]

In Putnam County, the middle school curriculum coordinator and the secondary school curriculum coordinator at the Educational Service Center reported that *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* is used throughout Putnam County to supplement civics textbooks.[42] In addition, although most social studies teachers surveyed reported they are not currently supplementing their civics textbooks, primarily because the civics textbooks are closely linked with the statewide civics assessment, they occasionally use videos, films, and laser disks in their classrooms.[43]

The Putnam County Educational Service Center has used grant money to implement an interesting interdisciplinary instructional program called Economic Junction that is geared toward the learning objectives of the statewide proficiency tests, including the citizenship test. This is a traveling program for middle school teachers throughout Putnam County and neighboring counties to use as a supplement to standard lesson plans. The program consists of 12 units, each of which represents a business or village function, like a grocery store or the police station. Using the materials provided by the program (including posters, lecture materials, and activities), a participating teacher creates one or more lessons that introduce the students to a particular business or government agency and teaches how it relates to their everyday lives. One of the units, for example, is about the courthouse and contains sections entitled "How the Courts Work," "The Judge's Supporting Cast," and "The Juvenile Court System."[44]

In New York, Niskayuna Central School District teachers use CCE's *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* in grades 7 and 11, while CCE's *We the People... Project Citizen* has been piloted by at least one teacher. In Albany City School District, neither course of study has been officially "adopted" by the district, but some teachers use them.[45] In addition, New York social studies teachers use a variety of newspapers, magazines, videotapes, and other resource materials to supplement their social studies texts; these supplemental materials are especially helpful in addressing the civics topics in social studies courses.[46]

Other CCE materials also are used by social studies teachers in the districts examined. In California, for example, some San Jose teachers use the *Foundations of Democracy* books published by CCE as supplemental instructional materials; purchase of these materials is made possible through a law-related education (LRE) program supported by the local community.[47] San Jose teachers also use social studies lesson aids from the Teacher Curriculum Institute (TCI) in Palo Alto; these materials use a very interactive approach.[48] Long Beach teachers reported using Close Up Foundation and Constitutional Rights Foundation materials.[49]

In the two Texas districts surveyed, namely, Austin and McAllen, neither *We the People* program has been officially adopted; nevertheless, teachers in both districts use both *We the People* programs as supplemental civics materials. In Austin, for example, teachers are especially using *We the People* materials in fifth- and eighth-grade U.S. history classes.[50] In McAllen, the use of *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* materials has generated student interest and enthusiasm far exceeding that associated with traditional civics textbooks. One high school student raved, "This class makes [civics] stick in your head."[51] Another student added, again referring to the use of *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* materials, "I thought I knew it all about the Bill of Rights. After three days in this class, I figured out I didn't know anything. Now I feel I can protect myself and my family."[52] Other supplemental materials that

Texas teachers use for civics instruction include the magazine *Time for Kids* in McAllen[53] and Project Vote in Austin.[54]

The Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation uses both *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* and *We the People... Project Citizen* in its schools, as well as CCE's curricular materials on prevention of violence and drug use in the schools.[55] In Munster, social studies teachers also reported using *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* to supplement its civics instruction.[56] One teacher in this district pointed out, however, that whereas teachers can and do use *We the People* material to cover civics topics in their advanced placement (AP) classes, they are unable to use this CCE material in their regular (non-AP) classes, because the state standards "handcuff" them and compel them to "teach to the standards."[57]

Using the Internet and World Wide Web for Civics Instruction

Increasingly significant sources of quality and effective civic education materials and information are the Internet and the World Wide Web. This technology is changing dramatically the breadth and availability of civics instructional materials (thereby changing the role of textbooks and other printed materials) and thus, in turn, beginning to transform civics curricula and courses. Use of this technology also is enhancing students' research skills by encouraging them to stay more up to date on current affairs than is possible through sole reliance on textbooks and other printed supplemental materials. In that sense, this technology does not replace printed instructional materials but complements and enhances their effectiveness. While challenges exist for school districts (e.g., ensuring that students have equitable access to quality instructional materials), several teachers and students with whom project researchers visited in the seven states shared positive and insightful comments regarding the influence of the Internet and the World Wide Web on civics instruction.

A number of school districts, especially rural ones, are increasingly realizing the potential for electronically accessing and sharing information to enhance civics instruction. Consider Putnam County, Ohio. Although this is a rural area comprised of small villages and small school districts, the county's schools have not shied away from the use of technology in instruction. The Putnam County Educational Service Center has played a key role in getting computers into the schools, creating a countywide district that is "heavy into technology."[58] Project researchers visiting Putnam County saw several computer labs; every classroom visited has at least one computer. In one government class, use of the Internet and World Wide Web is strongly encouraged so that students can participate in daily discussions of current events.[59] A Putnam County Schools elementary school teacher uses the Internet and the World Wide Web to enable her second graders to visit Washington, D.C., and to communicate by e-mail with pen pals in Australia to learn how life is different in the Southern Hemisphere.[60]

Technology plays a less visible role in civics instruction in the Findlay School District. The government teachers at one middle school said that they take advantage of the Internet and the World Wide Web. This school has a $375,000 federal technology grant that has enabled the school to wire all its classrooms and create a computer lab filled with

I-Macs. The government teachers use this technology for research and presentations, and their students interact with some of the international students at the local university via the Internet.[61] Interestingly, however, students in this school could not recall using the Internet and the World Wide Web in any of their social studies classes.[62]

As a result of its compliance with Nebraska standards, Raymond received a $500,000 grant from the Nebraska State Lottery Commission to purchase computers and provide technology training for staff.[63] This grant has enabled social studies teachers to supplement their civics and other social studies textbooks with the multitude of resources available on the Internet and the World Wide Web. Every classroom at the district's (one) secondary school has Internet access, and teachers estimate there is approximately one computer for every four students.[64] Thus, teachers have been allowed to substantially supplement instructional materials with Internet and World Wide Web resources, such as The Inaugural Classroom,[65] the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature's interactive site,[66] and the Model Congress Program.[67] For example, the government class makes extensive use of the Model Congress Program, available through the Columbia Education Center. As the government teacher points out, "The Model Congress enables kids from Raymond, Nebraska, to interact with kids from New Jersey. This project broadens their perspectives in a way that textbooks or traditional research projects simply can't."[68]

In Florida, teachers in Leon County Public Schools stated that a lot of the civics activities in their classrooms involves the use of technology, including research on the World Wide Web.[69] Students in this district told project researchers about their experiences writing e-mails to their representatives in Congress.[70] One student, explaining that this technology serves as a sufficient proxy for visiting important places, said, "Seeing what's going on is the best way to learn. For example, [I can] go to the capitol and see what's happening. Also, [I can make] virtual visits on the Internet."[71]

Some teachers in McAllen are fostering use of the Internet and the World Wide Web by students to conduct research on current events. For example, the teacher of a gifted and talented class uses the magazine *Time for Kids*, because many of its topics are civics related, which stimulates the students to stay informed about current events through their use of the Internet and the World Wide Web. As he stated, he uses this technology "as a tool to excite the children."[72]

Conclusions

This chapter demonstrates that, despite the fact that different states and districts have varying degrees of freedom in their textbook-adoption policies, selection of textbooks with civics content is surprisingly uniform across the districts selected. Teachers hold widely divergent views about the extent to which textbooks affect their civics instruction, as well as on how they use textbooks. Some teachers reported that textbooks do not affect their teaching at all, while others felt it affects their teaching a great deal. Some teachers do not have access to a civics textbook, others use a textbook as a resource, and others depend substantially on textbooks for most of their lessons.

Although some teachers reported relatively good opinions of civics texts, students are much less enthusiastic about them. Most students noted that civics textbooks are not interesting (with the exception of CCE's *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution*) and are overused in the classroom.

This chapter shows that supplemental civics materials used by teachers are many and varied and that Internet and World Wide Web technology is and will continue to be an important tool in teaching civics, especially in rural areas. While many other factors influence the effectiveness of civics instruction (including the qualifications and commitment of teachers, professional development practices, assessments, and district and school support for the classroom teacher), the types of instructional materials used by teachers play a key role in shaping students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Exciting, innovative instructional materials such as those produced by CCE also can overcome student apathy about civics, helping students (and their parents) understand the importance of civics instruction while engaging them in school and in their community.

Recommendations

The following recommendations propose actions that could be taken to enhance the use of civics instructional materials.

1. *CCE, in collaboration with its state coordinators and with state departments of education, should develop, for each state, a brief insert for CCE instructional materials that explains to district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers how CCE's materials are aligned with the civics content of that state's standards and assessments.* Social studies teachers who have not used CCE's materials often are well aware of the excellence of CCE's materials, yet are hesitant to consider using them in the classroom because they are unsure whether these materials are aligned with the civics content in their states' standards and assessments and in their districts' curricula. Providing teachers in each state with an easy-to-understand insert showing these alignments would encourage teachers not only to consider the use of CCE's materials even in states and districts in which they are not officially adopted but also to increase teachers' emphasis on civics content in their social studies lessons and activities.

2. *CCE should work with state departments of education, district social studies coordinators, and social studies teachers to advocate and promote the expanded use of the Internet and the World Wide Web in civics curricula and courses through the creation and dissemination of diverse technology-based civic education instructional materials, teacher guides, and "best practices" compilations.* Computer technology-based materials are enormously popular with students and, increasingly, teachers and parents. This technology provides tremendous access to historical sites, government officials, current events, students from diverse cultures and nations, and both published and unpublished civics materials. In rural areas and small districts, where civics-related field trips and access to non-school-based civics resources are often limited, the Internet and the World Wide Web can greatly increase the quality of civics education, in the classroom and in the home, and provide real-world examples

and experiences to students. In addition, civic participation is increasingly conducted via Internet dialogues. In order to prepare students to be effective and informed citizens in the 21st century, teachers must incorporate computing technology effectively into student learning experiences—and to do this, teachers and districts need civics curricula and course materials that facilitate such learning, as well as the professional development opportunities that encourage them to become familiar with and use these materials.

3. *State departments of education, in collaboration with CCE state and district coordinators, district social studies coordinators, and social studies teachers, should develop and disseminate in their states resource lists of supplemental civics materials for all grade levels that are aligned with the civics content in state standards and assessments.* These resource lists would assist district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers in developing civics curricula and courses based on hands-on, interactive, participatory learning activities that reinforce civic knowledge and enhance students' civic skills and dispositions. State departments of education should disseminate these resource lists, as well as encourage school districts to share with other districts in their state information and insights about effective and interesting supplemental civics materials. State departments of education in textbook-adoption states also should identify ways in which state and district funding for instructional materials could be used to purchase both state-approved textbooks and supplemental civics materials on these resource lists.

4. *CCE state and district coordinators should work with district social studies coordinators to assist social studies teachers in adapting their civics lesson plans to use supplemental civics materials more effectively in ways that address the civics content of state standards and assessments.* Mass-produced textbooks rarely meet students' learning needs or interests, nor do they address current topics most relevant to a school or community. Such inadequacies are especially noticeable in civic education; not only are civics topics often buried in the language of a history or government book, but also they often fail to address civics topics most relevant to a school and community and to the promotion of students' civic skills and dispositions.

5. *CCE, in collaboration with state education policymakers, CCE state coordinators, district social studies coordinators, and social studies teachers, should actively explore ways to foster students' civic dispositions through greater attention to civic dispositions in the civics content of state standards, state assessments, district curricula, and classroom lessons.* Every district visited by project researchers reported that civic dispositions are emphasized least by teachers compared to the other components of civic education. CCE should actively seek to promote greater state, district, and classroom attention to civic dispositions by articulating to state and district educators what civic dispositions are and why they are so important in educating students for informed and effective citizenship. State education policymakers and district social studies coordinators should ensure that state and district civics frameworks provide the appropriate emphasis on civic dispositions.

6. *CCE should work with state departments of education in textbook-adoption states, as well as with social studies textbook publishers, to ensure incorporation of civics content into social studies textbooks, including those for Spanish speakers.* CCE should continue to expand the use of its publications and programs as supplemental materials for civics instruction. To increase substantially the number of students having the opportunity to learn from CCE materials, however, CCE should collaborate with state departments of education in textbook-adoption states to ensure that the textbook guidelines provided to textbook publishers focus significantly and effectively on civics topics. While teachers and students agree that one cannot learn all civics from a textbook, ensuring the inclusion of quality civics content in textbooks would likely increase even more the use of CCE supplemental materials. In addition, by working with state departments of education to ensure that Spanish-language textbooks with civics content are published and approved for district adoption in Florida, California, Texas, and other states, CCE could increase substantially the availability of civics instructional materials to first-generation American students and their parents.

Notes

[1] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with David Peterson, High School Teacher, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[2] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Catherine Graham, Manager, Curriculum and Learning Resources, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with High School Social Studies Teachers, Gunderson High School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 24, 1999.

[5] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Linda Mehlbrech, History/Social Studies Curriculum Leader, Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, California, February 25, 1999.

[6] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[7] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Alvin Bell, Department Head and Government Teacher, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[8] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Mark Miller, District Curriculum Coordinator, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[9] Findlay School District, "Textbook Adoptions—K-12," Findlay, Ohio, n.d., n.p. (handout).

[10] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[11] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Elementary School Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[12] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Teachers, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[13] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Dale Rasmussen, Social Studies Teacher; and Susan Schraeder, Current Issues Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[14] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Bob Van Amburgh, District Social Studies Coordinator, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[15] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Henry Mueller, District Social Studies Coordinator, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[16] Interview by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Dan Hartz, President, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation Teachers' Association, Evansville, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[17] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with High School Social Studies Teachers, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, Evansville, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[18] Bell interview.

[19] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Mick West, Coordinator for Social Studies, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[24] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with High School Seniors, School Town of Munster, Munster, Indiana, January 22, 1999.

[28] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Student, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with High School Seniors, Newburgh, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[31] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Students, Memorial High School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[32] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Ted Larson, Social Studies Teacher, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[33] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Teachers, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Kim Blazek, Business/Economics Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[36] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[37] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Peggy Durham, Community Relations Manager, *Tallahassee Democrat*, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[38] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Elementary School Teachers, W.T. Moore Elementary School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[39] Ibid.

[40] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[41] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Eighth-Grade Social Studies Students, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[42] LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[43] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Student, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[44] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Pat Smith, Middle School Curriculum Coordinator; and Scott Hummel, Secondary School Curriculum Coordinator, Putnam County Educational Service Center, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[45] LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[46] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[47] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Elementary School Teachers, Williams Elementary School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[48] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Bruce Compton, Eighth-Grade Social Studies Teacher, Bret Harte Middle School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[49] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[50] LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[51] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Students, Memorial High School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Leonelo H. Gonzalez Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[54] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[55] LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[56] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[57] Interview by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Doug Fix, High School Social Studies Teacher, School Town of Munster, Munster, Indiana, January 22, 1999.

[58] Smith and Hummel interviews.

[59] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Student, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[60] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Elementary School Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[61] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[62] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Eighth Grade Social Studies Students, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[63] Rasmussen and Schraeder interviews.

[64] Ibid.

[65] PBS Online, *The Inaugural Classroom*. Online. Available: http://www.pbs.org/inaugural97/lessonplans.html. Accessed: June 17, 1999.

[66] Nebraska Unicameral Legislature, *Nebraska Unicameral*. Online. Available: http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/index.htm. Accessed: June 17, 1999.

[67] Columbia Education Center, *The Electronic Model Congress*. Online. Available: http://www.col-ed.org/pro/temc.html. Accessed: June 17, 1999.

[68] Rasmussen and Schraeder interviews.

[69] Interviews by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with High School Teachers, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[70] Ibid.

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[71] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Sixth Grade Students, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[72] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Leonelo H. Gonzalez Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

Chapter 8. Influences of Assessment on Civic Education at the District Level

Statewide assessment of civics is one of the strongest means currently available to ensure that civics content is taught in all school districts. The reality, however, is that very few states assess civics statewide. Moreover, in states in which social studies are not assessed, the standards and assessment movement has resulted in a further marginalization of civic education and, more generally, of social studies as other subjects are tested and receive greater and greater attention in state and district curricula. Further, developing quality assessments for civics is difficult, because it is not easy to assess civic dispositions and civic skills.

There is no question that statewide civics assessments and the resultant reporting of scores or other "high stakes" outcomes have an exceptionally strong potential to shift educational priorities and affect educational practices at the district level. At the same time, these assessments easily can become more important than the civics knowledge, skills, and dispositions they are assessing, as well as overly focused on civic knowledge at the expense of civic skills and civic dispositions. For example, a teacher in Miami-Dade County Public Schools effectively expressed to project researchers the dilemma posed by standardized assessment of civics content: "Testing is a double-edged sword. We don't want testing, [but] if other subjects have testing, we need it too, or we will be ignored."[1]

This chapter first looks at district-level perceptions of the importance of civics assessment, then at the influences of various assessment policies on civic education at the district level in the seven states. It examines, in turn, those states in which civics content currently is included in state assessments, those states that assess students but do not include a civics assessment, and those states currently developing new social studies assessments. The chapter also discusses how civics is and can be assessed, focusing on the weaknesses of traditional testing in assessing civic higher-order thinking skills, participation, and dispositions.

Project researchers conducted on-site visits in 13 school districts across the United States, observing civics classes and meeting with state and district social studies coordinators, classroom teachers, students, and others. This chapter combines the insights gained from these on-site visits with the results of surveys that were distributed to district social studies coordinators and secondary social studies teachers in these 13 districts plus one additional district. (The section entitled "Framework for Analysis and Methodology" in chapter 6 describes in greater detail the selection and examination of these sites.)

District-Level Perceptions of the Importance of Assessment

Teachers and administrators surveyed and interviewed by project researchers have mixed feelings about testing. The range and strength of opinions about assessment attest to the perceived powerful influence—positive or negative—that teachers and administrators see in it. In terms of the potential impact of testing, for example, a teacher in Ohio, a state that tests civics content, told us, "Assessments drive the curriculum 100 percent."[2] In some states without standardized tests, there are teachers who believe a statewide civics assessment would be a good idea; other teachers are very skeptical about its value, however.

One of the questions project researchers asked secondary social studies teachers was: "How important do you think civic education assessment of students would be in promoting instruction in civic education?" Teachers' responses ranged from strong support to uncertainty and vehement opposition. Table 8.1 summarizes the types of responses from teachers in each of the 14 districts.

Table 8.1
Levels of Support by Secondary Social Studies Teachers for Assessment to Promote Instruction in Civic Education

		Number of Teacher Responses (percentage)							
State	**District**	**Favor Civics Assessment**		**Support Depends on Assessment Design**		**Oppose Civics Assessment**		**Not Applicable or No Response**	
California	Long Beach	2	(67)	0		1	(33)	0	
	San Jose	2	(33)	1	(17)	1	(17)	2	(33)
Florida	Miami-Dade County	12	(48)	1	(4)	8	(32)	4	(16)
	Leon County	9	(82)	0		1	(9)	1	(9)
Indiana	Evansville-Vanderburgh	6	(43)	3	(21)	1	(7)	4	(29)
	Munster	2	(33)	1	(17)	2	(33)	1	(17)
Nebraska	Lincoln	15	(42)	3	(8)	10	(28)	8	(22)
	Raymond	1	(50)	0		1	(50)	0	
New York	Albany	5	(71)	1	(14)	1	(14)	0	
	Niskayuna	10	(67)	3	(20)	1	(7)	1	(7)
Ohio	Findlay	1	(11)	3	(33)	2	(22)	3	(33)
	Putnam County	4	(80)	0		1	(20)	0	
Texas	Austin	23	(48)	6	(13)	10	(21)	10	(21)
	McAllen	8	(62)	1	(8)	2	(15)	2	(15)
Total		637	(50)	44	(12)	266	(21)	54	(18)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Fully half of all teachers surveyed expressed support for a state civics assessment. Indeed, in every district except Findlay, there were at least as many responses favoring an assessment in civics as there were for any other single category in table 8.1. In Ohio, which already has a separate, stand-alone test in civics, more teachers (5) expressed their support for the assessment than opposed it outright (3). In Florida and Texas, which already have statewide tests in other subject areas but not in civics, at least one-half of the respondents (21 of 36 in Florida, 31 of 62 in Texas) favored a civics assessment. For instance, one teacher in Austin responded, "After seeing how Texas assesses math, science, and English, I think [assessment] would be a great boost to civic education."[3] Teachers in two states that have plans to implement statewide tests in the future—Nebraska and New York—seem to embrace the upcoming civics assessment: 16 of 38 Nebraska respondents and 15 of 22 New York respondents said that they favored a civics assessment.

Interestingly, another 12 percent of respondents based their support for an assessment in civics on the type of assessment used. For example, one teacher from Lincoln replied, "It depends on the assessment. I think that pen and paper tests are pointless for assessing civic education and would be negative—others might be more positive."[4] A respondent from Niskayuna Central School District stated, "The more 'real life' civic education assessment there is, the more important it is. [Written tests] cannot measure the level of ability students have in their participatory skills."[5] Several teachers strongly expressed the view that any assessment of civics topics should address the participatory skills and dispositions so important to civic education. If such an assessment could be devised in civics, many of the respondents seemed to suggest that they would support it.

Table 8.2 lists some representative responses from teachers who favor standardized assessment of civics content in state standards.

Table 8.2
Representative Responses from Secondary Social Studies Teachers in Favor of Standardized Assessment of Civics Content

District	Secondary Social Studies Teacher Response
Long Beach	I think students should be able to demonstrate a competency in civic knowledge to graduate from high school.
San Jose	I think it is essential. Too many [teachers] have major deficiencies in their own education.
Leon County	Very! If there were a test assessing [students'] civic knowledge as there is for reading, writing, and math skills that help determine promotion, I'm sure it would increase the number of teachers including solid civic education [content] in their curriculum.
Miami-Dade County	Very! Students need to be forced to think.... [A] civic issues assessment will do that.
Evansville-Vanderburgh	Very important, if [students] are expected to learn the civics process. They tend to not take it seriously if not graded.
Munster	[A civics content assessment] should be given to all students so that they are better ... prepared to carry this on throughout their life.
Lincoln	Very! It would make students more accountable.

(continued)

District	Secondary Social Studies Teacher Response
Raymond	It is needed. We seem to be more concerned with making sure students can get a job and not so much with their being responsible citizens.
Albany	Important! By assessing student understanding of civics/government, I can monitor how well I am teaching about civics.
Niskayuna	Very important. It would encourage teachers to include civics instruction and students to learn it.
Putnam County	We now do this assessment through statewide competency testing. Very important.
Austin	It is very important, because civic education is at the heart and soul [of] achieving our main mission … which is to teach kids to become successful members of our society.
McAllen	I feel it is very important, if we are to prepare our students to be future citizens and to be active in the community.

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

Despite this support for civics assessment, a strong minority of respondents (21 percent) opposed any kind of assessment in civics, as table 8.1 shows. Table 8.3 lists representative responses from secondary social studies teachers in this category.

Table 8.3
Representative Responses from Secondary Social Studies Teachers Opposed to or Concerned about Standardized Assessment of Civics Content

District	Secondary Social Studies Teacher Response
San Jose	Obviously it would have an impact, but how can you really grade if it's the act you are teaching?
Miami-Dade County	I think too much time is spent on assessment now. Not enough time is left for instruction. I'm opposed to any new assessment[s].
Miami-Dade County	Absolutely none!
Munster	Assessment should not be a factor.
Lincoln	Assessment is not very important. But this does not mean I don't think civic education is important. I think instead that civic virtue, civic participation, and even civic skills are difficult to assess in a meaningful way.
Raymond	I think any time you have standards you spend time teaching to a test and you do not get to have time to do hands-on practice.
Albany	I don't think assessment can be used as a motivation tool. It may promote, but at what quality?

District	Secondary Social Studies Teacher Response
Niskayuna	It might put [students] off—relating concrete political current events with civic concepts gets people excited.
Findlay	Action plans, volunteers, etc. [are] more valuable than knowing trivial facts.
Austin	If you accept the major goal of civic education is to produce more thoughtful, concerned, and involved citizens, now and in the future, then evaluation must take a longer view than the "did you pass the test?" mode of evaluation now in vogue.
McAllen	The only things a standardized civic education assessment would promote are test-taking hysteria and test-centered instruction.

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

As one might expect, to some degree the teachers' responses illustrated in tables 8.2 and 8.3 are a reflection of the current status of standardized civics assessment in their states and districts. Table 8.4 summarizes the current civics assessment situation in the seven states visited and surveyed by project researchers. The sections that follow table 8.4 address, in turn, the influences of assessment on civic education in the states in each of the three categories in the table.

Table 8.4
Current Status of Statewide Civics Assessment in Seven States

State	Currently Assesses Civics	Is Developing Social Studies Assessment	Assesses Subjects Other Than Civics
California			X
Florida			X
Indiana			X
Nebraska		X	
New York		X	
Ohio	X		
Texas			X

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

A State in Which Civics Is Currently Assessed

Ohio is the only one of the seven states that specifically tests citizenship as one component of its statewide Proficiency Tests. An Ohio district social studies coordinator suggested that one positive aspect of the Ohio test is that it helps civic education by targeting weaker teachers. He told us, "You can ignore the proficiency exams, but [if you do] you look like an idiot. Before, if you had quality, it was simply because the teacher was good, but it didn't bring the bottom up."[6]

Ohio illustrates how assessments have the potential to focus time and resources on civics and to encourage teachers and students to be accountable for the material. Although the

Ohio citizenship test also encompasses other social studies topics, such as economics, geography, and history, testing these social studies through the lens of citizenship places a significant and important emphasis on civic education. As a Putnam County teacher stated, "Ohio's … Citizenship Proficiency Tests have drawn a great deal of attention to civics education. I think this has driven Ohio instruction."[7]

Schools and school districts in Ohio take the Proficiency Tests, nicknamed "March Madness," very seriously. For one week each spring, students in the fourth, sixth, ninth, and twelfth grades take tests in five subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, science, and citizenship.[8] Testing companies grade the tests, and students must answer correctly 70 percent of the questions on a test to pass that test.[9] Current policies prescribe that students must pass the Ninth Grade Proficiency Tests to graduate from high school. The ninth-grade citizenship test focuses on state information, while the twelfth-grade test focuses more on national information and the federal government.[10] Because of the graduation requirement, Ohio law permits schools to begin giving the ninth-grade tests in the eighth grade to allow students an extra opportunity to pass. By 2003, Ohio will add an exit-level proficiency exam that seniors will be required to pass in order to graduate.[11]

In addition to having high stakes for students failing the exams, Ohio is in the process of adopting and implementing a report card system to evaluate every school in the state. Part of the evaluation will include each school's students' results from the Proficiency Tests, along with student attendance figures and dropout rates. These report cards will be available to the public. Thus far, little discussion has taken place in the state about the repercussions for schools receiving poor reports, but a middle school curriculum coordinator in Putnam County believes that "the state will step in" to assist schools that fail to meet state standards.[12]

The Ohio tests have had obvious effects on altering priorities among subjects in terms of their classroom coverage; they also have influenced teaching practices in the state. Not all teachers believe this is positive, though. A middle school teacher reported that the standard practice in the eighth grade is to teach U.S. history for most of the year. About six weeks before the Proficiency Tests are administered, however, teachers now stop and conduct a mini-course in civics to help students pass the citizenship test. This teacher also reported that he does not care for the way the tests have affected social studies education in the state. He formerly taught Ohio History, but this subject is now taught in the fifth grade, and he misses teaching that course: "These kids get to my eighth grade class and don't know Ohio history like they should."[13]

Teachers in Putnam County had various opinions about the 12th-grade exams. One teacher told us that he thought "the test isn't a big deal," as students are not required to pass it to graduate. A different teacher, though, told us he was forced to alter his courses to teach the materials covered on the statewide assessments before their administration in the spring. As he said, "I had to shift around my curriculum, and I don't like that."[14]

For the most part, the statewide assessments have forced teachers to focus on civics to a greater extent than before, because many did not emphasize that subject before the implementation of the tests.[15] For example, a Findlay teacher said, "Before the mandate

I wasn't teaching government or economics. I taught ancient history, and I was content. But now I've made changes. Lots of [the new] curriculum is based on real-world decision making."[16] Another said, "In eighth grade we absolutely teach to the test, which is not all bad."[17] The Findlay district coordinator praised the tests' effect on teachers by saying, "The assessment tests help keep teachers on task."[18] A Findlay middle school teacher gave a very strong endorsement to statewide assessment when she said, "Since there is a citizenship assessment test, I do not feel that civics takes a back seat to other subjects."[19]

Overall, testing in Ohio seems to be popular. Even the students interviewed expressed support for the Proficiency Tests. One student said, "They are hard, but they are a good idea, because we know we are learning a lot."[20] Some teachers reported being astonished that other states do not have a citizenship assessment test. For example, one said, "Boo on them. What country do they belong to?"[21] Another said, "I think any citizen should object to that."[22]

A few Ohio teachers are skeptical about the Proficiency Tests. One teacher reported pressure to teach to the test and said, "I don't agree with teaching to the test."[23] Another teacher complained, "The test does little for civic virtue or civic participation."[24] Another teacher said, "It's damaging to interest in government, because it's trivia."[25] Still another stated, "The test is a shotgun approach. Its focus needs to be narrowed."[26] Additional teacher comments included, "I'm not sure that this test is the kind of government we want to be teaching"[27]; and "There [are] much deeper things for citizens to learn than the stripes of flags."[28] One teacher expressed concern for the amount of time dedicated to testing and test preparation: "To prepare for the test we basically stop the regular curriculum and teach to the test for a couple of weeks. It is time-consuming."[29]

One Putnam County elementary school teacher admitted teaching to the test but stressed, "I add in other units like immigration, women's rights, and other cultures." She also stated that, while she considers the test "something you have to do," she sees some advantages to it. She remarked, "The tests cover higher-order thinking skills. They call for interpretation and analysis. The tests have changed not just what we teach but the way in which we teach."[30]

The Ohio citizenship assessment continues to be revised. One teacher said, "Another problem with the Proficiency Tests is that they change from year to year."[31] Despite this complaint, teachers seem to perceive that an opportunity has been created by the revisions process to improve the assessment: "[The state] did hold statewide meetings to get input about the assessment tests. It will be interesting to see if [the state] implements the suggested changes."[32]

States Developing New Social Studies Assessments

Both Nebraska and New York have specific plans to implement new statewide social studies assessments. Nebraska will be implementing statewide testing for the first time, whereas New York is developing new tests to replace its current tests and testing policies. In both states, social studies teachers reported that they are worried that preparing students for the new social studies tests will detract from the teachers' ability to implement civics activities in their classrooms. In addition, teachers speculated that the type of test developed by their states would not adequately capture the essence and breadth of civic education.

At one Lincoln high school, the teachers know that mandatory assessment is coming, and they are not happy about it. They are apprehensive that they may be required to "teach to the test" in the future, limiting their freedom to change or supplement the curriculum and restricting what they can do with civics.[33] Elementary school teachers in Lincoln are worried about the assessments because the assessments are tied to the standards, and "[the state] couldn't find a test that covered all the stuff in the standards."[34] In Raymond, the district's teachers are currently in a "wait-and-see" mode. Although the district is most interested in criterion-based testing, the teachers understand the Nebraska Legislature is not, because criterion-based assessments are difficult to use to compare student performance in districts throughout the state.[35] The teachers in Raymond seemed concerned that the legislature has its own agenda with respect to testing and will not listen to teachers.[36]

In New York, the current state-mandated assessment in social studies will change dramatically in the next few years. These tests have two levels, the Regents Test and the Regents Competency Test; the latter represents a lower level of achievement. Currently, students must pass one of these tests to graduate from high school. Soon, the Regents Competency Test will be phased out, and all students will be required to pass the Regents Test to graduate from high school. Thus, high school graduation will be considerably more challenging for many students. Beginning in the year 2000, tenth-grade students in New York will have to pass a Regents Test in social studies (covering global history from ninth and tenth grades). Eleventh-grade students will have to pass a Regents Test covering American history beginning in the year 2001. Eighth-grade students also will begin taking a Regents Test for social studies in 2001. Not passing the eighth-grade test, however, will not prevent students from advancing to high school.[37]

Generally, New York teachers reported that they believe the new Regents Test will restrict the materials they are able to teach. Because time must be spent on preparation for the test, some teachers fear they will not be able to spend time on civics-oriented activities. One teacher interviewed specifically expressed concerns about the demands placed on students with the new test. Arguing that students do not necessarily flourish under higher demands, he expects to see higher dropout rates.[38] Another high school teacher stated that the new Regents Test would have a "major detrimental impact" on his ability to teach civics.[39] A different teacher expressed his fear that students "would be tested to death"; he believes that the state should devote its time to hiring quality teachers instead of using tests to guarantee academic standards.[40]

New York social studies teachers interviewed by project researchers are confident about their curriculum and their ability to prepare students for the test, but they are not enthusiastic about the effects that the Regents Test will have on their teaching. "We have never given eighth-grade final exams. Ninth grade is a fine time to start that. The hands-on activities, the fun, all of that is lost when you have to do the test. We have a tradition of doing activities," explained Niskayuna's social studies coordinator.[41]

States Assessing Subjects Other Than Civics

The most disheartening project finding is the negative effects on civics that statewide assessment has had in the four states (among the seven) that test some subject areas in state standards but do not test civics content. In these states (California, Florida, Indiana, and Texas), assessment drives curriculum and priorities. As a Leon County teacher said, "There hasn't been an emphasis from the state ... in civics. [The state] emphasizes science, math, and reading. As long as [students] pass the test, we don't care if they're good citizens."[42]

In Florida, the new statewide standardized test, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), does not explicitly test social studies.[43] Describing the impact of the standardized test, the Leon County district social studies coordinator explained, "The FCAT is so important that it affects teacher pay raises and also can result in rewards for schools. It only tests the three R's, though, so all the money and resources go to those topics. Until we get accountability for social studies, we are not going to get any [state] support [for the social studies]."[44]

Even the student teachers with whom project researchers spoke are acutely aware of the importance of the test as a determinant of school priorities. For example, at a Florida middle school, one student teacher said, "The standards are not in measurable terms. There is no accountability. Since there is no test, there is not enough emphasis on social studies."[45]

The director of Leon County's S.C.A.L.E.S. Project, a teen court and court education center, provided further insight when he expressed concern about the effect of standardized tests. He noted that "many times the teachers aren't interested in [S.C.A.L.E.S. Project programs], because they are overwhelmed. They focus on what is tested."[46]

Similarly, Texas tests reading and math, in addition to other subjects, with the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tests. However, Texas tests social studies only at the eighth grade level, and the students' test results are not factored into the state's accountability ratings for Texas schools. In Texas, citizenship and government are laced throughout the state standards, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). According to the teachers, however, civics is often a very low curriculum priority, especially because teachers feel considerable pressure to have their students do well on the other subjects tested in the TAAS. In this regard, for example, a McAllen elementary school teacher said, "Civics is not taught because of the TAAS—test, test, test!"[47] The pressures resulting from the state's tests and the state's use of test results to hold schools accountable mean that teachers (at least those with whom project researchers spoke) determine their priorities based on which subjects are tested by the TAAS and feel pressured to do so by their school and district administrators. Another McAllen elementary school teacher affirmed this: "Reading and mathematics are definitely first;

they're the TAAS-tested skills. We try and integrate writing, especially since that hits the kids again in the eighth grade. Social studies and science are at the bottom of the list, quite frankly."[48]

One McAllen teacher suggested that she believes the problems associated with testing are caused by weak school administrators who feel pressured by school district and state officials to show good results: "What impedes the teaching of civics and social studies is leadership. It all comes down to how the schools do on the test. The principals should trust the teachers to be creative, but instead Texas is so test-happy."[49] The pressures to show good results on the state assessments in Texas are clearly very high.

Indiana does not have statewide assessment exams for social studies, but it does have them for reading, English, and math and will soon have one for science.[50] Once again, as in Texas and Florida, having no statewide secondary social studies assessment in Indiana lessens the importance placed on social studies in district curricula and courses. As one Evansville-Vanderburgh social studies teacher noted, "If 'high-stakes' [social studies] assessment tests were mandated, we would concentrate more on meeting [state] standards."[51]

In California, both the San Jose and the Long Beach districts have assessments aligned with their districts' standards. However, because the districts have no social studies standards, they have no assessments in this area.[52] Currently, math and reading are assessed, so they are the subjects receiving priority. An eighth-grade social studies teacher did indicate, however, that language arts essays used to assess students' quality of writing periodically integrate elements of civics.[53]

While periodically integrating civics topics into language arts essays may highlight civics, the incentive to teach civics remains a personal choice of the teacher rather than an explicit outcome of the nature of the current assessments. Indeed, as one San Jose teacher responded, "Assessment at the present time is driving instruction. If [civics] were assessed, we would have to teach civic education."[54]

Like San Jose Unified School District, Long Beach Unified School District assesses only math and reading. Currently, Long Beach does have a pilot assessment in the social sciences based on the district's social science standards. The outcome of this pilot assessment is still unknown, though, and in the meantime the social sciences are given a lower priority in the district than are the tested subjects. This lower priority is particularly evident at the elementary school level. As one elementary school teacher commented, "It's very hard to pull civic education into the classroom, because there is not room for it. It's not assessed, so we don't have the time or resources. But it's still very important. A teacher needs to make it happen."[55] "Long Beach is becoming very assessment driven,"[56] a teacher at another elementary school remarked. In fact, the Long Beach district no longer will promote third-grade students to the next grade unless they achieve a certain reading levels as determined by a series of assessments. In Long Beach, the consequences of students' not meeting assessment goals have resulted in an overwhelming and sometimes exclusive emphasis on reading, to the detriment of civics and related social studies.

Assessment Approaches at the District Level

A Miami-Dade County secondary school teacher gave an interesting analogy for statewide assessments that test people's knowledge and behavior. The teacher commented that assessment in Florida likely would be "of little value. I frequently wonder if it would amount to just another test. For example, in Dade County, drivers are examined for the state's driver's license. Drive down any road in Miami, and there is little evidence that drivers passed a test."[57] Perhaps the most salient issue regarding civics assessment is how one assesses civic participation and civic dispositions. Testing civic knowledge, at least at a basic level, can be accomplished through a written test. How, though, does one assess the other components of civic education? Furthermore, if one cannot effectively assess civic skills and dispositions, is it worth testing civic knowledge by itself?

Although project researchers did not ask teachers how they would recommend assessing civic participation and civic dispositions, many teachers' responses demonstrate that there is disagreement on whether it is possible to do it effectively with standardized tests. A problem with a standardized test is that many teachers will teach to the test. If the test is knowledge based and the teachers and administrators worry about the passing rates of their students, then students will primarily receive knowledge-based civics instruction. Since an excessive concentration on knowledge runs contrary to the understanding that civic education includes skills and dispositions as well as knowledge, the question then is, Are knowledge-based civics tests better than no civics tests?

Some teachers strongly believe that a knowledge-based test is not sufficient. As an Evansville-Vanderburgh teacher remarked, "Civic education should not be assessed through a test but should be assessed by the actual participation in the world."[58] A teacher in Austin added, "Documentation of civic participation would be enough assessment."[59]

These and related questions pertaining to appropriate assessment tools for civics are timely, as states and districts devise or revise their assessments to align them with their state content standards. In speaking with teachers and district administrators in Nebraska, for example, project researchers heard educators' perspectives and practical experiences regarding assessment techniques that state legislators should welcome.

Nebraska will implement mandatory assessments by 2003.[60] Specifically, Nebraska may require that each district have criterion-based exams aligned to standards, which include civics as a major theme. In Lincoln, where the district requires students to take standardized multiple-choice social studies tests in grades three, five, and eight, teachers expressed their hope that assessment will include student portfolios and performance tests. At the same time, Raymond teachers believe that the Nebraska Legislature will not be interested in this type of testing, primarily because certain criterion-based assessments are not easy to use in comparing districts.[61] The Raymond teachers are concerned that the legislature has its own statewide testing agenda and, thus, will not listen to teachers' views.[62]

It is possible for statewide assessments to promote higher-order thinking skills and perhaps even civic participation. New York's Regents Test for social studies, for example, has two parts: a multiple-choice section and a Document Based Question (DBQ). The DBQ requires students to use their prior knowledge of a topic, along with a few provided documents, to write an essay. According to the Albany City School District social studies coordinator, much of the test is application and reflects the national standards for the social studies.[63]

Although New York teachers generally reported that the Regents Test in social studies does not include civics, the sample DBQ reviewed by project researchers clearly emphasizes civics. It requires students to write a letter about the closing of a post office in western New York. Students are provided with documents that illustrate the importance of the post office to the community, as well as documents that show how closing the post office will save money. In this case, the issue is not civics content assessment, but assessment of civic understanding.[64]

The Raymond district does not use any standardized civics test, but some teachers assess civics in their classes with essays, reports, and exams.[65] One teacher uses an assessment system called "Thinking at Right Angles," which requires students to describe what they think about a subject, describe how they feel about a subject, and then synthesize the two sets of reactions.[66]

Raymond also promotes civic participation by using what the school calls the "Senior File," a checklist of tasks related to civics that each student must complete before graduation. The list includes registering to vote; registering for the draft; attending official city, county, or state meetings; and similar civic activities.[67]

In Miami-Dade County, one primary civics assessment consists of a student-selected community service project that each student must fulfill as a graduation requirement. Each student must complete his or her project sometime between the ninth and twelfth grades, and each student receives an individual evaluation of his or her project.[68]

Conclusions

State-level policies regarding assessment greatly influence decisions concerning civic education at the district level. Though a few states do not have statewide assessments in any subject, their numbers are dwindling. In states that have tests in other subjects but not civics, civic education clearly loses out with respect to class time, funding, and curricular priorities. Indeed, one of the most powerful ways an assessment of civics topics can impact civic education is through the absence of any such assessment. In contrast, states that use their assessment policies to focus specific attention on the teaching of civics topics can have a significant impact. As noted by one Ohio teacher, "Since there is a citizenship assessment test, I do not feel that civics takes a back seat to other subjects."[69] For civic education to receive the classroom attention it deserves, states must adopt and promote assessment policies that place civics on a par with other subjects like reading and mathematics.

It is important to note, though, that successfully addressing all components of civic education requires statewide civics assessment tools that are more comprehensive than just a bubble-test on basic civic knowledge. Being an effective citizen demands much more than simply knowing when the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed or how many votes are needed to override a presidential veto. Granted, from a positive perspective, tests that concentrate almost solely on civic knowledge can focus more time and resources on civics and most likely can improve the basic level of civic education among all students by identifying schools, teachers, and students who lack this knowledge. However, on the negative side, a test of civics topics that does not cover all the components of civic education, including the higher-order intellectual and participatory skills so vital to effective citizenship, leads school districts to give inadequate attention to these critical components. In states with expansive civics and social studies standards, such tests can threaten academic freedom and creativity, as well as participatory projects and hands-on activities for students. Thus, state policies influence civic education at the district level not only through the presence or absence of statewide civics assessments, but also through the designs of such assessments.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest how assessment can be used to improve the instruction of civics topics.

1. *State education policymakers should take all appropriate steps to devise and implement a statewide assessment of the civics content of state standards, with particular attention to the alignment of the standards and the assessment.* A state might accomplish this goal through implementing a stand-alone civics assessment or by designing explicit civics content sections in other statewide social studies assessments. In states that already have statewide assessments in subjects other than civics but not in civics, these assessments clearly drive resource allocation; what is assessed receives the time, attention, and funding. Assessing civics is necessary to ensure the necessary support for civic education in these states and, in turn, to provide the civic education necessary for today's youth at all grade levels. As demonstrated by such states as Texas and California, states can create effective social studies standards with strong civics content. However, testing other subjects but not testing civics almost guarantees that the civics content in the standards will be marginalized and virtually ignored by many school administrators and teachers. This is a lesson that states currently devising or revising social studies assessments (e.g., New York and Nebraska) should not forget, namely, that in order for civics instruction to be effective, its assessment needs to be explicit and unambiguous.

2. *State education policymakers should, in collaboration with CCE and state educators, develop alternative forms of assessment (e.g., portfolios and performance-based activities) that complement traditional knowledge-based tests and more fully assess students' mastery of all components of civic education.* Traditional multiple-choice tests have a limited ability to assess higher-order civic intellectual skills, civic participation, and civic dispositions. Performance-based tests, on the other hand, require students to demonstrate not only their knowledge of civics but also their

abilities to understand and apply this knowledge. (One example of a performance-based test is a 1994 pilot TAAS test in Texas that required students to research information, draw conclusions, and write about their findings; unfortunately, the test was not adopted statewide because it was considered too expensive to administer and grade.) Alternative assessments, such as portfolios, also could give districts the freedom necessary to engage students in the kinds of activities that, over time, are the most effective in fostering informed and effective citizenship.

3. *States and school districts should develop accountability systems and measures that ensure a curricular emphasis on civic education that addresses civic knowledge as well as civic intellectual skills, civic participation, and civic dispositions.* The best way for civic education to gain greater support and prominence is to make sure that it is assessed statewide and that schools and districts are held accountable for their students' performance on the assessment. Examples of accountability measures are publicly reporting on school performance and preventing nonpassing students from graduating or being promoted to higher grades. However, designing accountability systems so that they only address the civic knowledge of students actually could inhibit students from becoming informed and effective citizens. These systems also need to focus attention on the importance of civic skills, participation, and dispositions. Civic education involves much more than just dates and names in a textbook; accountability systems must reflect this fact.

Notes

[1] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Mays Middle School, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Goulds, Florida, February 24, 1999.

[2] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[3] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Mark Miller, District Curriculum Coordinator, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[7] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[8] Ohio Department of Education, *Planning for Graduation*, Columbus, Ohio, n.d., n.p. (pamphlet)

[9] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Robert Fox, Principal, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[10] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Twelfth-Grade Students Taking American Political Systems, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[11] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[12] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Pat Smith, Middle School Curriculum Coordinator; and Scott Hummel, Secondary School Curriculum Coordinator, Putnam County Educational Service Center, Ottawa, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[13] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[14] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Miller interview.

[19] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[20] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Student, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[21] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Elementary School Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[31] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Teachers, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[34] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, District Office, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[35] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Dale Rasmussen, Social Studies Teacher, and Susan Schraeder, Current Issues Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with George Gregory, New York State Social Studies Coordinator, New York State Department of Education, Albany, New York, Feb. 9, 1999.

[38] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Chris Martel, Teacher, Albany School #21, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[39] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Dan Murray, Teacher, Albany High School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[40] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with David Peterson, Teacher, Albany High School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[41] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Henry Mueller, Social Studies Coordinator, Iroquois Middle School, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 8, 1999.

[42] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Russell H. Landry, Director, S.C.A.L.E.S. Project, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[43] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with John Doyle, Director, Division of Social Sciences, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida, February 23, 1999.

[44] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Bruce Long, District Social Studies Coordinator, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[45] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Middle School Student Teachers, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[46] Landry interview.

[47] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Interview with Dan Hartz, President, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation Teachers' Association, Evansville, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[51] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[52] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Catherine Graham, Manager, Curriculum and Learning Resources, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[53] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Bruce Compton, Eighth-Grade Social Studies Teacher, Bret Harte Middle School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[54] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[55] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Elementary School Teachers, Burroughs Elementary School, Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, California, February 25, 1999.

[56] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Third-Grade Teacher, Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, California, February 26, 1999.

[57] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with John LeFeber, Social Studies Coordinator, Nebraska State Board of Education, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[61] Rasmussen and Schraeder interviews.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Bob Van Amburgh, District Social Studies Coordinator, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Rasmussen and Schraeder interviews.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Raymond Public Schools, Raymond Central Secondary School, "Senior File," February 12, 1999 (computer printout).

[68] Doyle interview.

[69] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

Chapter 9. Influences of Professional Development on Civic Education at the District Level

The professional training and development of teachers are critical factors influencing the quality, effectiveness, and thoroughness of instruction in any subject; civic education is no exception. This chapter examines the influences of preservice training (i.e., university programs for new teachers) and in-service professional development programs (i.e., programs and activities for current teachers) on civic education at the district level.

During on-site visits to 13 school districts in seven states, researchers met with and observed numerous teachers of civics. Researchers also spoke with school and district administrators responsible for the professional development of teachers, as well as faculty at university teacher education programs (see chapter 6 for a more extensive description of the district-level methodology). Researchers found examples of teacher preparation programs that emphasize civics and diverse examples of professional development opportunities in civic education. Nevertheless, echoing the results reported in chapter 2 concerning teacher professional development policies in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, researchers found a deficiency in the attention that professional development policies and practices give specifically to civic education.

Preservice Training

Most states offer only a general social studies certification for teachers, rather than a more specific teaching certification in civics (see table 2.10). Thus, most states and their university programs of teacher education do not use the most direct incentive to address students' civic education needs. Both practicing K-12 teachers and university professors of education recognize the importance of civics for students and communities, but their most immediate concern is preparing future teachers to meet the broader requirements of social studies certification. Unless state certification includes a specific civics component, however, states risk the possibility that their future classroom teachers will not have the preservice training necessary to foster students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Influence of Standards on Teacher Education Programs

Though states rarely use a specific civics certification or even a specific civics component in a social studies certification, states have other means of influencing the content of teacher education programs. In interviews with university teacher education program representatives, researchers learned that state standards are potentially the most powerful of these secondary methods of influence. Because teacher education program faculty know their students will ultimately be held responsible for knowing the topics that states require them to teach, most social studies teacher preparation programs introduce, at a minimum, their states' social studies standards into the preservice teacher training courses.

For instance, in Leon County, each student in Florida State University's master's degree program in social studies education receives a copy of Florida's *Sunshine State Standards*.[1] Students work with these standards primarily in developing lesson plans, but the standards are emphasized throughout their course work.[2]

Faculty at the Teachers' College at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln reported similar activities. The themes of Nebraska's new social studies standards are the basis for teaching methods used throughout the required block of courses for prospective teachers, including a course on social studies/language arts methods and a series of five practicum courses, which provide students with increasing levels of interaction with children before they begin student teaching. By referring to the standards, faculty are able to introduce the standards' civics content into both lecture and practicum courses.[3]

University teacher education representatives in California confirmed the use of the state history/social science standards adopted in October 1998, which include civics, in their courses. A professor at San Jose State University called the standards "a major focus for all of us teaching in that academic area.... In my own methods course I use it quite extensively; it's included in the course reader, and all of our lessons are standards based. And it's certainly connected to assessment."[4] The teacher education program at California State University at Long Beach also aligns its teaching to the state standards. Professors receive copies of the standards and discuss the need to teach the standards in the classroom.[5] A faculty member at Santa Clara University explained the sentiment driving the use of standards in the preservice training of teachers, saying that she incorporates standards into assignments because teachers will have to use them when they start teaching.[6]

These examples make it readily apparent that standards can have a substantial influence on preservice teacher training. The standards promulgated today not only affect the curricula and course work in today's classrooms but also will influence teachers' and districts' instructional philosophy and practices for years into the future.

Relying on state standards to heighten the attention given to civic education in programs of teacher training may not be an adequate solution, however. Support for standards among teacher education program faculty and their students is far from universal. For many, standards are an inadequate resource and foundation for aspiring teachers as they prepare for their profession and become increasingly knowledgeable in their areas of academic specialization. For instance, one Leon County student teacher from Florida A&M University told researchers that since the standards are not written "in measurable terms" and there is no accountability, the standards are underutilized. Ultimately, another noted, "Teachers are going to have their own ways to educate students. If [state officials] give you ideas, it's useful, but you're still going to deviate and do your own thing."[7]

A graduate student in the teacher education program at Florida State University echoed this sentiment, explaining some of the difficulties she was experiencing while student teaching in Leon County: "I have a hard time using the standards approach, because standards force you to teach a lot of things that you have to cover; plus everyone else

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wants to teach chronologically and we [student teachers] are expected to do so. Kids are used to learning without thinking, going from page 1 to 200. I want to teach issues across time such as race and nationalism, but kids get lost."[8]

In California, even though teacher education program representatives reported efforts to use the standards throughout their curricula, project researchers were reminded that because professors are intellectuals, with their own ideologies and styles, they often disagree with some of the standards.[9]

Some educators challenged outright the value of the standards. For instance, one Florida A&M University student teacher spoke very critically of the standards, noting, "At [my university] we ripped [Florida's *Sunshine State Standards*] apart. We didn't use them at all."[10]

Others were not necessarily so strident, but their statements nevertheless highlighted the limitations of reliance on standards to bring civics to the forefront in teacher education programs. For example, another student teacher from Florida A&M University criticized the way in which that university's program tried to use the standards: "At [Florida A&M University] we were told to use the standards in our lesson plans for our course work. They don't tell us about how to use the standards—just to use them. I would write my lesson plans, and then find standards to match up with them."[11]

Florida is a particularly troubling example for those who rely on standards alone to communicate the importance of civics to aspiring teachers. Florida does not have a statewide test of civics topics (nor does it have plans to create one), and it has only a general social studies certification requirement for those teaching civics topics. At the same time, Florida requires that teachers document the particular aspects of the standards covered in each lesson plan. However, these policies seem to lead to a more legalistic, less enthusiastic use of the standards in developing lesson plans. Echoing the statements of experienced Florida teachers related in chapter 6, aspiring educators in Florida learn to play the game early. As one Florida graduate student in teacher education told researchers, "In our lesson plans we are supposed to correlate the standards to the plan. Generally, we develop our plan and then go back to the standards and check if they match."[12] Another student remarked similarly: "We are required to write down which benchmark we are using. Honestly, we teach what we want to teach, and we just find the standards to write down."[13]

Although standards are not as strong an influence on civic education at the district level as a specific certification requirement in civics, they can be a stimulus to improve and promote civic education. Teacher education programs appear at least to be responding to state standards and the civics topics they contain. Nevertheless, reliance on state social studies standards alone likely will not greatly enhance the teaching of civics in classrooms. Teacher education programs need to do more to prepare effective and informed teachers of civics content.

Initiatives to Focus on Civics in Teacher Education Programs

Researchers found several examples of teacher education programs that seek to address what they identify as needs in civic education. Faculty in these programs have recognized the importance of civics in the classroom and are taking steps to highlight civic education in their curricula.

For instance, the teacher education program at Florida State University is large enough to have a separate Department of Social Studies Education, in which civic education has become a central element in the course of study. According to a graduate student currently in the department, the courses are issue oriented and civics related. She explains, " In our program we put a lot of emphasis on how to promote civic dispositions, how to teach subjective issues, how to handle and discuss values with kids. We learn how to develop activities about civic participation. On the other hand, we are expected to know the knowledge component of civics."[14]

Because of the initiative of this Florida State University department, civics moves beyond being just a checklist of standards' benchmarks, instead becoming for prospective teachers an important foundation for much of their course development activity. Indeed, the department takes the knowledge component of civic education so seriously that it requires students to have completed 36 hours in history and social science just to apply to the program.[15]

A result of this approach can be seen in the comments of another Florida State University graduate student in social studies education, who already recognizes the need for paying more attention to civics: " People are not expected to be taught civics, but kids are expected to know civics. To be civic-minded is an important value in our society. Personal preferences of the teacher determine how much and which civics content is taught. I feel like we should teach more current events, but we are pressured not to."[16]

The Teachers' College at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln has been similarly aggressive in making civic education a regular part of its teacher education curriculum. A faculty member at the Teachers' College told researchers that its faculty members see civic education as a vital part of the teaching profession, saying, " The primary goal is to produce teachers who are able to prepare students to be good citizens."[17]

As a result of this philosophy, the theme of civic education is prominent in all foundation courses that education majors are required to take at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. These courses address basic teaching skills as well as the history of education. Students are encouraged to think in both broad and specific terms about the role of education in a " healthy democracy."[18] Another faculty member told researchers that a major topic in her teaching methods course is the concept of citizenship. She said, " We've always assumed the end result of a social studies education is civic competence.... So how do we know what that is?"[19]

The faculty members at the Teachers' College at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln have gone to extra lengths to understand more fully what the concept of civic competence really means. For instance, rather than merely familiarize prospective teachers with the state's social studies standards and ask that they be accepted simply because they represent state policy, the faculty try to make sure the standards are both useful and engaging to aspiring teachers. To do this, they invite Nebraska's state director of social science education to talk about the new standards with prospective teachers. He addresses appropriate methods for teaching the standards and supplies extensive Internet-based and other materials to assist them. One faculty member noted excitedly to researchers, "He really gets the students fired up about the standards."[20]

Ultimately, successful efforts to enhance the skills of future teachers in civic education result from a teacher education program philosophy dedicated to raising the level of citizenship among students. Indeed, though one faculty member at the Teachers' College at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln told researchers that he thinks much of what currently goes on in schools actually "thwarts good citizenship," he believes that it is critical for teachers to see themselves as having "civic responsibilities to the community" in their roles as educators.[21]

Other schools of teacher education in the seven states also have recognized the importance of civic education. For instance, although the undergraduate teacher preparation program at California State University at Long Beach does not promote the theme of civic education across all its courses, the program does contain classes that emphasize civics. The professor of a course in teaching methods (Liberal Studies 403) provided researchers with examples of how civics is emphasized. In developing a fifth-grade lesson plan in democracy, the prospective teachers reflect on the following questions: How would you define democracy for your students? What values and beliefs are important to democracy? What are some examples of democratic practices? Where do children learn about democracy? In what ways does our culture lend itself to democratic practice, and in what ways is it an obstacle? What is the role of the schools in a democratic society?[22]

The Liberal Studies program at California State University at Long Beach, which is the university's state-approved multiple subject-matter program through which students earn a state teaching certification, has made an extra effort to assure districts and schools that teachers completing its program are qualified. As a result, the program has a strong reputation for being rigorous. Recently the program began graduating teachers with a "guarantee" from the university. Specifically, if the school district that hires a new teacher is dissatisfied with that teacher's performance, the teacher can go back to the university and take free classes to improve. For this reason, the program turns out quality teachers who are in demand in area school districts.[23]

Of course, not every college or professor of teacher education is so actively engaged in fostering civic education. For instance, a recent graduate of The University of Texas-Pan American now teaching in McAllen told researchers that her elementary education program did not stress civics education: "The [University of Texas-Pan American] teacher program is not very civics minded. [Civics is] [p]retty much [a] zero in the education program. The education program [is] focused on classroom strategies like how to teach whatever subject. But it does [encourage] elementary teachers to look at the classroom as a learning community."[24]

Without specific incentives to encourage a special focus on civics, the states, districts, and schools have no guarantee that any particular university teacher education program adequately addresses the important area of civic education. When universities that are designing or updating curricula in programs for future social studies teachers look to state policies for guidance, these state policies do not emphasize that teachers need to have a significant amount of education specifically on civics topics. Indeed, the teaching certification process rarely emphasizes civic education. Although programs of teacher education often pay attention to the civics content in state standards, the usefulness of relying on state standards to enhance the civics focus in teacher education programs is limited.

The project's sampling of preservice teacher education programs in the seven states revealed excellent examples in which program faculty are effectively emphasizing civics in the training of teachers; however, there is little evidence that such attention to civics is widespread. Moreover, such bright spots usually result from the initiative of the faculty themselves, rather than from any systematic response to incentives from state policies. As a result, a prime opportunity to improve the level and understanding of citizenship among the nation's prospective teachers is often lost before they even enter the classroom on a full-time basis.

In-Service Professional Development

Professional training and development should not end when a teacher obtains his or her certification and enters the classroom. Regardless of teachers' content knowledge and teaching skills when they enter the profession, they need to update constantly their knowledge and skills not only with respect to education generally but also with respect to the subjects and courses they teach. Unfortunately, as in the teacher preparation stage, researchers found that the scarcity of civics-specific training continues through in-service professional development. Moreover, although general social studies professional development opportunities are available in all the districts that researchers visited, many social studies teachers still do not participate in these opportunities. They reported that the reasons for their nonparticipation include a lack of financial support from the district and a lack of information regarding existing opportunities. Even in states with professional development requirements, teachers reported that these difficulties often arise.

District or State Requirements and Resources

The opportunities for professional development for teachers vary from state to state (see table 2.10). Many states now require teachers to participate in a certain number of professional development activities every year. For instance, in order to continue teaching, teachers in California must renew their credentials by earning a specified number of credit hours every five years.[25]

Florida requires teachers to participate in 120 in-service hours or take six graduate-level credit hours every five years. Half of these credits (or points) must be in the teacher's field of specialization.[26] The Leon County school district has no professional development requirements beyond the state requirements, but Leon County's social studies coordinator noted that there are a variety of institutes and agencies that offer workshops and projects for teachers.[27] For instance, the Justice Teaching Center in Tallahassee sponsors a state-level and local-level Justice Teaching Institute for selected teachers from grades 6-12; participants attend a series of workshops, seminars, and courtroom experiences.[28] He also noted that there is an unusual abundance of opportunities in Tallahassee County, because the county is home to the state government and two major state universities.[29]

Likewise, Florida requires teachers in Miami-Dade County to complete several hours of additional professional development to qualify for recertification. Professional development activities are sponsored by Florida's regional teacher education centers, the school district, and outside organizations. The director of the Division of Social Sciences at Miami-Dade County Public Schools noted that many professional development activities for civics also involve students, unlike professional development activities for other subjects.

The Miami-Dade County district serves as a good example of leveraging outside resources in the professional development of teachers. For example, the Close Up Foundation participates actively in the district's civic education activities, sponsoring Close Up, a weeklong intense study of the federal government in Washington, D.C., for both students and teachers in grades 6-12. A Close Up program in Tallahassee also is held yearly for students and teachers from grades 10-12. The League of Women Voters is involved in Miami-Dade County civics activities as well; it has developed a curriculum similar to that of the Center for Civic Education's *We the People... Project Citizen* program and offers in-service programs for teachers.[30]

Ohio provides a very interesting example that highlights the impact a professional development requirement can have. Ohio currently has a certification system in which teachers who obtain professional certification no longer have to complete any in-service training. Indeed, one teacher told researchers that he had not taken any additional training or gone to any workshops for years.[31] However, the state is now moving to a system that will issue licenses that have to be renewed every five years. In-service hours or other education credits will have to be earned in order for licenses to be renewed. Each teacher will have to write an individual plan that outlines how renewal will be accomplished. A local board comprised of three teachers and two administrators will approve each teacher plan, and this board has the option to refuse renewal of a teacher's license should the teacher fail to follow the plan.

Findlay's district curriculum coordinator described to researchers the possible effects that the new system will have. He said, "If you have a permanent certification, then you never have to do professional development—ever. Under the new licensure system independent people [will] come in and observe the teachers, and professional development will be required every five years."[32] For him (and presumably many others in situations similar to his), it is frustrating that a very good professional development opportunity might exist in the district but that teachers would not participate. Requiring professional development is one way to ensure that more teachers benefit from the opportunity for added training and that, as a result, more students receive a better education.

Several districts noted that they have their own district professional development requirements as well. For example, in the Albany City School District, teachers are required to participate in 20 hours of professional development every year.[33] However, there is very little professional development specifically aimed at civic education. The Albany district's professional development committee puts programs on the professional development menu, and teachers then select which of these activities, if any, to participate in or decide to go elsewhere for their professional development. The professional development activities offered involve such areas as social studies content, methods of instruction, and state mandates (e.g., standards).[34]

In Lincoln, the social studies consultant told researchers that teachers are required to do ten and one-half hours of district professional development every year.[35] Pay raises are tied to these hours, and some grants and stipends are provided as additional incentives. It is the job of the social studies consultant to provide programs through which this requirement can be fulfilled, although she admits that it is hard to find quality programs. In addition, she states bluntly that professional development has its limits: "The best stuff comes from teachers who are good at what they do."[36]

The University of Nebraska at Lincoln provides in-service programs that offer Lincoln teachers a particularly rich opportunity to meet their professional development needs. Indeed, because the university is in close proximity to district schools, teachers often are able to earn advanced degrees there.[37] The university also has an interesting arrangement with the district whereby any district teacher who allows an education student at the university's Teachers' College to student teach or complete one of the required practicum courses in his or her classroom gets points toward a tuition waiver for additional education courses at the Teachers' College.[38]

Simply requiring professional development is not problem free, however. In addition to the scarcity of professional development opportunities, obtaining funding can be a significant barrier to the success of a professional development program. For instance, several teachers in the San Jose Unified School District expressed frustration to researchers because they feel that their district often does not provide time off or financial assistance for teachers to meet California's professional development requirement.[39] As one high school teacher in San Jose put it, "I consider myself a successful teacher, [yet] I have to spend $1800 [of my own money] per year to earn credits."[40]

High school teachers in the Findlay School District Ohio echoed the concerns of their colleagues in San Jose, saying, "There's opportunity for professional development but there is no funding to go."[41] Another said that the "school would help with funding but wouldn't volunteer it."[42] None of the Findlay middle school teachers told researchers that they had participated in in-service training relating to civics, although they remember one official from the Ohio Department of Education who came to the district to provide general guidance on teaching.[43]

However, Findlay's district curriculum coordinator directly contradicted the views of the teachers in his district. He stated that, in Ohio, "there are regional professional development centers that provide each school district with professional development funds."[44] He then went on to say, "In addition, the Findlay School District provides its own funding for professional development. We receive $20,000 from the state, and we provide [an additional] $20,000."[45] Moreover, he noted that the state social studies coordinator had, in fact, been in Findlay to promote in-service professional development in civics.[46]

This Ohio situation illustrates the disconnect that may exist in a district's professional development chain of communication. Teachers in Lincoln discussed similar problems with researchers. They believe that staff development opportunities need to be better publicized for teachers to take advantage of them. They also think that teacher participation in staff development and other teacher activities needs to be better publicized. As one teacher pointed out, "We end up having to call the newspapers ourselves; otherwise, only the bad news about schools ends up in the paper."[47] Generally speaking, though, the teachers think that Lincoln is very aggressive and successful in terms of its programs and that teachers do not get enough credit for their innovation. Says one teacher, "We go to conferences where people are talking about 'new' programs, and we've been doing them here for years."[48] Teachers do wish that they had access to more money for development. As it is, they have to be creative and innovative, and they believe they do not get adequately compensated for their creativity.

Interestingly, two of the smallest, most rural sites that researchers visited, namely, Putnam County and Raymond, had a lot of good news to report about their professional development initiatives. The Putnam County Educational Service Center provides in-service courses on social studies conducted by representatives from the Ohio Law-Related Education program and the Center for Civic Education (see Appendix G for more details on the Educational Service Center). Some of these sessions specifically address how to implement civics in social studies curricula. The Educational Service Center also provides opportunities for teachers to go to the state capital for further law-related education training.

A high school teacher in Putnam County noted that the administration at his school encouraged attendance at professional development days at state conferences or at classes offered by colleges; the school pays for those activities. "There are also countywide meetings," he said, "where the county brings in people to provide in-service training. It's interesting to see what the trends in education are and to find out what is happening in other states."[49] Nevertheless, there is still a great deal of difficulty in getting information from a state or regional level down to classroom teachers. To illustrate this point, despite the numerous opportunities for professional development identified above, another Putnam County high school teacher commented that he "didn't know of any in-service [training] for civics" and said that "all training has been about general teaching techniques mostly." [50]

Teachers in Raymond said they believe the school, district, and state adequately support their professional development. The district has a very liberal policy regarding teachers' attendance at outside professional development programs, allowing teachers to take paid leave when appropriate opportunities arise. Interestingly, the teachers in Raymond noted an issue that may be unique to smaller, rural districts but is nevertheless of great importance. They said that a major impediment to their taking advantage of outside training is the difficulty of getting substitute teachers to come to the rural community of Raymond.[51]

Professional development programs specifically for civics face additional difficulties. In a dilemma that has been noted several times throughout this report (e.g., in sections on curriculum development, classroom course work, and preservice teacher training), a lack of emphasis on civics in state policies can have negative consequences on district civic education practices. For instance, California currently places a heavy emphasis on subjects other than social studies, especially on the improvement of reading scores (see chapter 6). Only at the end of 1998 did California adopt new standards in history/social science, and they have yet to be implemented. Moreover, California has yet to introduce a statewide assessment aligned to the new standards.

Reflecting the emphasis on areas other than civics or even on social studies, California's San Jose Unified School District currently has district standards only in math, reading, and science. To accompany the standards, San Jose has created positions called "resource teachers" for each of these subjects. Resource teachers are teachers hired to work as district staff; they serve as resources to teachers of these subjects throughout the district.

San Jose does not, however, have a social studies resource teacher, because of funding shortages. The district's manager of curriculum and learning resources told researchers that having a social studies resource teacher would make a very big difference in the quantity and quality of social studies education offered in the district.[52] However, when district officials allocated funding for the district's resource teacher positions, they followed the lead of the state and gave a lower priority to civics and all social studies.

An interesting type of social studies teacher professional development is occurring in San Jose in conjunction with a new district textbook-adoption process for kindergarten through eighth grade. Desirous of the millions of dollars the San Jose district expends for textbooks, textbook companies are providing their own staff development for San Jose's teachers.[53]

Perspectives of Secondary Social Studies Teachers

In an effort to corroborate the findings of on-site visits, researchers distributed and collected surveys from secondary school social studies teachers in 14 districts in seven states. (see chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of the survey methodology). In the survey (see Appendix E), teachers were asked, "Please describe your most recent professional development experience in civic education. Include date, sponsoring organization, topics covered, etc."[54] As reported in table 6.1, 200 teachers responded to the survey in some fashion. Because some teachers listed more than one recent and relevant professional development experience in civic education, the total number of responses on this question was 207; these responses listed a total of 109 separate professional development activities. Table 9.1 categorizes these responses into several different types of professional development activity, listing the totals for each category as well as subtotals for each state surveyed.

Table 9.1
Secondary Social Studies Teachers' Most Recent Professional Development Experiences in Selected States

	Number of Responses for Various Categories of Professional Development							
Professional Development Experience	**CA**	**FL**	**IN**	**NE**	**NY**	**OH**	**TX**	**Total Responses (percentage)**
"None"; "Cannot recall"; or no response	4	18	8	16	15	6	31	98 (47)
Workshop on standards/curricula	1	2	3	10	1	2	5	24 (12)
International, national, or state social studies conference	1	1	2	6	1	4	4	19 (9)
Workshop on law-related education or other legal issues	0	2	0	2	1	1	13	19 (9)
Informal training through leadership of student activity	2	4	3	1	2	1	5	18 (9)
Workshop by Center for Civic Education	0	1	5	2	2	0	1	13 (6)
Workshop by AP/College Board	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	6 (3)
Workshop on issues of interest to minorities	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	6 (3)
Seminar or speaker on social studies topic	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	4 (2)
Workshop on assessment	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2 (1)
Total Responses	9	37	22	38	23	14	64	207

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent because of rounding. Total responses for each state and for all responses may add to numbers greater than those listed in table 6.1, because some survey respondents listed more than one professional development experience as their most recent.

As table 9.1 shows, only a slight majority of teachers (102 of 200 respondents) could even recall their last professional development experience related to civics and decided to respond to the question. This response pattern does not reflect overwhelming enthusiasm for and experience with professional development activities in civic education. Nevertheless, as discovered in the numerous site visits across the country, teachers with an interest in civic education are able to locate and participate in a variety of professional development opportunities.

The most popular professional development activity was an effort to become more familiar with the civics content in state standards or curricula. In all, 24 teachers reported activity in this area, including at least one teacher from each of the seven states surveyed. Examples of this type of activity included workshops on state standards as well as district workshops on social studies.

In all, 19 teachers replied that attendance at international, national, or state conferences with other educators in social studies was their most recent professional development experience in civics. For instance, one teacher from Findlay School District reported attending a conference to share civic education materials and practices with teachers and headmasters in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several others mentioned state social studies conferences as well as national conferences, such as the annual conference sponsored by the National Council for the Social Studies.

The same number (19) responded that they had attended workshops on law-related education (LRE) or other legal issues. Most of these responses (13) came from Texas, almost entirely from Austin respondents, reflecting a strong LRE program run by the State Bar of Texas. According to information received during site visits, LRE workshops are useful, in part, because of the quality of the materials the teachers receive. Furthermore, researchers often found that district or community support was particularly available to enable teachers to attend LRE training. Indeed, the survey results match closely with sentiments expressed to researchers during on-site visits. At the same time, teachers in some districts are still experiencing difficulties in obtaining this training. For instance, as a McAllen teacher told researchers, "From the school administration, we could use more encouragement in things like LRE, although most of the time [the coordinator for social studies for McAllen Independent School District] will pay for the extra in-services. Certainly, we don't have that sense that the administration is breathing down our necks like they do for reading and math."[55]

Several teachers (18) reported that they had garnered a meaningful, if informal, professional development experience through their participation in and leadership of a student activity, often in association with some political or civic organization. For instance, teachers in Miami-Dade County, Leon County, Evansville-Vanderburgh, Lincoln, and McAllen all described how they worked with some type of student mock voting project. Beyond being a rewarding volunteer experience, teachers responding in this category reported that they themselves came away from such projects with greater understanding and knowledge about civics topics. Four other teachers reported similarly informal experiences of adult learning through attendance at a lecture on some civics topic.

The Center for Civic Education (CCE), generally through workshops to familiarize and train teachers in CCE's *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* and *We the People... Project Citizen* programs, provided memorable professional development experiences for 13 respondents. Six more teachers said they had taken similar training from the College Board in connection with their advanced placement (AP) subject tests. Six other teachers reported attending workshops on issues specifically related to minority issues. For instance, two teachers in Florida noted participation in an program called LEGADO, which specifically examines Hispanic influences and contributions in the history of the United States. An Albany teacher reporting attending a lecture on the history of integration in public schools.

Interestingly, only two teachers, both from Florida, mentioned a professional development experience having to do with student assessment. Given the importance and controversy surrounding the issue of assessment (see chapter 8), it is surprising that so few teachers reported a recent professional development experience in the area (and that the only two who did so are in Florida, a state without a statewide assessments). It is quite possible that many teachers did not report professional development concerning assessment because the survey question addressed civics. Nevertheless, the small number of responses in this category raises the possibility that perhaps some of the controversy about testing arises from a scarcity of professional development opportunities that might allow teachers to become more familiar with the subject.

Clearly, there are teachers who focus on civics and take the initiative to find professional development opportunities in civic education, and a variety of such opportunities do exist. Nevertheless, table 9.1 suggests that secondary social studies teachers do not have a particularly strong focus on civic education professional development activities. Indeed, given the wide diversity of professional development activities in civic education indicated in table 9.1, it is troubling that more teachers of civics topics do not take advantage of these experiences.

Conclusions

In order to advance students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions, many more teachers need to be convinced of the importance of civic education and obtain the training and experience they need to teach civics content effectively. Unfortunately, states and school districts do not systematically encourage and aid such efforts through policies and practices relating to preservice and in-service teacher professional development. If civics is to become a priority, the states, school districts, and schools must provide greater leadership and incentives for teachers to gain the necessary training and experience specific to civic education. In particular, teacher preparation programs need to follow the lead of the more innovative programs and give greater attention to fostering aspiring social studies teachers' interest and confidence in teaching civics.

In-service professional development can occur through participation with other educators in organized programs and workshops as well as through informal opportunities in the community and in the school. For example, it is relatively easy for teachers to gain experience (e.g., as leaders of student extracurricular activities) that will make them better informed and more effective educators of students with respect to the various components of civic education.

Social studies teachers have unique opportunities to improve their civics skills by fulfilling their own roles as informed and active citizens. As a McAllen teacher suggested to researchers, a professional development experience in civic education can occur when teachers themselves simply are involved in civics. This fifth-grade teacher, who had recently visited the Hidalgo County jail, was passionate about at least one way to see that teachers teach more civics: "To get more civics taught, we need to have teachers go out and get more involved in the process—participating in campaigns or going on rides with police officers. The trouble is that teachers aren't involved themselves."[56] If teachers themselves become better citizens, they will then become better teachers of other citizens.

Anyone who looks back on his or her own educational experiences and recalls the powerful impact of one or two teachers understands that teachers can make a critical difference whether students enjoy the process of becoming more informed and effective citizens or become bored and uninterested in civics. Any effort to increase the quality of civic education for all students has to address the preservice and in-service development of teachers of civic education. State standards with civics content and statewide civics assessments likely will fail to significantly enhance students' civic education if teachers lack civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions and the willingness to apply them. Standards and assessment may force low-performing teachers to work harder but may not ensure that teachers truly perform better. Thus, a focused attention on improving the effectiveness of teachers in fostering students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions is an essential component of any comprehensive effort to enhance civic education at the district level.

Recommendations

The following recommendations identify actions that would enhance the certification and professional development of social studies teachers who teach or may teach civics.

1. *State education policymakers, working in collaboration with school district officials, teachers, and university faculties of education, should create a preservice teacher certification specifically in civics and also add civics content to preservice social studies teacher certifications.* Prospective teachers and professors of education alike generally recognize the importance of civics. Nevertheless, the most immediate concern of both groups is to ensure that the curriculum in a program of teacher education meets the requirements of existing certification options. States that do not include a specific civics component in the certification are not using the most direct incentive they have to get programs of teacher education to focus their attention on

civics. Relying on state standards to communicate state goals in civic education is not adequate, because aspiring teachers and their professors know that content standards may come and go but the state certification requirements are necessary to gain employment as a teacher. By not addressing civics in their teacher certification requirements, states leave to chance (and occasional university foresight) the adequate preparation of aspiring teachers in civics.

2. *University teacher training programs should include civic education content in their teacher education curricula for all grade levels (K-12).* Regardless of the existence or absence of state incentives for increasing teacher and district attention to civics, university programs of teacher education should include civics content in their curricula for all grade levels. Expecting teachers to teach content that they cannot remember receiving is unrealistic. If the formative years of preservice education do not inculcate within future social studies teachers the higher goal of enhancing student citizenship, it will be exceedingly more difficult for any reforms of in-service professional development to improve civic education practices. Moreover, if civic education content is to be more effectively integrated into elementary education curricula, elementary school teachers need to be taught civic education content, the reasons for teaching civics, and effective methods for teaching it to their students.

3. *States and school districts should require that teachers who teach secondary-level civics content should complete a specified number of in-service, civics-related professional development hours every year and should seek to develop incentives to encourage teacher participation in quality civic education in-service programs.* In-service and other professional development opportunities provide teachers with new information about incorporating technology into their civics instruction, ideas about improving their coverage of civic education components, and recommendations about implementing new state statutes or district policies relating to civic education in the curriculum. All teachers should be required to participate in some form of such professional development, with states establishing the minimum requirements in consultation with district social studies coordinators and social studies teachers.

4. *States, districts, and schools should identify and communicate to teachers and district officials information about in-service professional development opportunities in civic education, provide released time for teachers to participate in these activities, and ensure that adequate funding is available for teachers to take advantage of these opportunities.* Teachers cite their lack of knowledge about, interest in, and resources to fund in-service civic education professional development as reasons they do not teach civics content. District and school officials should take the lead to identify ways in which this information, time, and resources could be provided to teachers to enable them to participate in workshops, conferences, and other programs related to civics topics. Although "on-task" time with students is very valuable and important, professional development opportunities must be made available to teachers to learn about the civics content in state social studies standards and its application in the classroom and community. In addition, by their personal participation in civic activities, teachers could become more informed and impassioned about civic

education and its value in social studies curricula. Activities could include riding with police officers, visiting jails, observing court hearings, participating in environmental or community projects, attending a protest rally, visiting state legislators, or teaching a citizenship class to new immigrants. Finally, adequate funding is crucial if professional development is to be required for renewed certification. Ultimately, good intentions will not pay for better and greater teacher training opportunities; only larger district training budgets will.

5. *School districts should establish professional development partnerships with university teacher education programs for both preservice and in-service training in civics.* University teacher education programs and school districts represent valuable resources for each other. For example, current secondary social studies teachers could participate in preservice training at an area university by sharing classroom experiences with students training to be teachers, while at the same time participate in in-service programs at the university in which they explore with university faculty the academic content and pedagogical issues related to their classroom teaching responsibilities. Teachers and university education programs form a natural, reciprocal partnership, especially with respect to civics, which is a critically important element of both state policies and district practices. Creating and sustaining partnerships of this type would foster renewed attention to the inclusion of greater civics content not only in kindergarten through grade 12 but also in social studies teacher preparation programs.

Notes

[1] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with John Lunstrum, Professor and Coordinator of Social Science Education, College of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Susan Wunder, Professor; and Karl Hostetler, Professor, Teachers' College, University of Nebraska at Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[4] Telephone message to Tiffany Reyes from Bill Hannah, Professor, College of Education, San Jose State University, San Jose, California, March 19, 1999.

[5] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Ken Curtis, Professor; and Dan O'Connor, Professor, Liberal Studies Department, California State University at Long Beach, Long Beach, California, February 26, 1999.

[6] Interview by Tiffany Reyes with Dorothea French, Professor, Department of History, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California, February 9, 1999.

[7] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Student Teachers, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[8] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Social Science Education Graduate Student, College of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[9] Curtis and O'Connor interviews.

[10] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Student Teachers, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Social Science Education Graduate Student, College of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[13] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Student Teachers, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[14] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Social Science Education Graduate Student, College of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[15] Lunstrum interview.

[16] Interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Social Science Education Graduate Student, College of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[17] Wunder and Hostetler interviews.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Curtis and O'Connor interviews.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Reynaldo G. Garza Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[25] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Anne Hubbard, Fifth-Grade Teacher, Williams Elementary School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[26] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with John Doyle, Director, Division of Social Sciences, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida, February 23, 1999.

[27] LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[28] Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Division of Social Sciences, "District-Wide Social Studies Programs/Projects Related to Civics and Law Education," Miami, Florida, n.d., n.p. (handout).

[29] LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999.

[30] Doyle interview.

[31] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[32] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Mark Miller, District Curriculum Coordinator, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[33] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Bob Van Amburgh, District Social Studies Coordinator, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Karen Stanley, Social Studies Consultant, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Teachers, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[38] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, District Office, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[39] Hubbard interview.

[40] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with High School Social Studies Teachers, Gunderson High School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 24, 1999.

[41] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[42] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[43] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[44] Miller interview.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, District Office, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Dale Rasmussen, Social Studies Teacher; and Susan Schraeder, Current Issues Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999; and interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Kim Blazek, Business/Economics Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[52] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Catherine Graham, Manager, Curriculum and Learning Resources, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[53] Ibid.

[54] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[55] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Leonelo H. Gonzalez Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 23, 1999.

[56] Ibid.

Chapter 10. Influences of Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities on Civic Education at the District Level

Extracurricular and co-curricular activities, like few classroom exercises, give students the opportunity to take the civic knowledge they have gained in the classroom to the society at large. In this way, they actively learn how to engage in the affairs of their communities, developing the skills and dispositions that will allow them to become better informed and more involved citizens. Students and teachers alike often are extremely enthusiastic about these types of programs and their value in education, because these activities bring the lessons of civic education to life, making participation in civic matters both important and enjoyable. As one student put it, "What we learned you can't learn from a textbook. You have to discuss and argue about the issues."[1]

This chapter examines the importance of extracurricular and co-curricular activities in civic education at the district level. It discusses how these efforts can affect students' civic knowledge, civic intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions. The chapter describes some of the many activities in which students engage in the districts visited by project researchers and concludes with a more focused discussion of some of the most popular extracurricular and co-curricular activities that researchers encountered. The distinction between extracurricular activities and co-curricular activities can become ambiguous, because they play similar roles in civic education. Extracurricular activities are not connected directly with any formal class, whereas co-curricular exercises exist outside the district and school curriculum but are formally linked to this curriculum and to classroom activities. Nevertheless, both extracurricular and co-curricular programs afford students the important experience of applying abstract civics concepts and knowledge in concrete situations.

Project researchers gained much of their insight through on-site visits to 13 school districts in seven states, during which they met with state and school district administrators, teachers, students, and other community leaders. This chapter also draws on responses to surveys of secondary social studies teachers in these 13 districts, plus one additional district in Texas. The diversity of viewpoints expressed by these individuals provided researchers opportunities to explore the influences of extracurricular and co-curricular activities on civic education practices at the district level. (For more discussion on the methodology used to compile information for this chapter, see the section labeled "Framework for Analysis and Methodology" in chapter 6.)

Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities and Civic Education

Through their many district-level discussions, project researchers learned that extracurricular and co-curricular activities are often the civic education experiences that engage and excite students most. Indeed, the difference in the enthusiasm among both students and teachers when discussing with researchers their extracurricular and co-curricular activities and their feelings about traditional classroom activities was often striking. For teachers, the implementation of and participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities often affords them the greatest amount of autonomy in their work. For students, the interactive nature of these activities seems most important and enjoyable. If enthusiasm is any indicator of how effective these activities are, the use of extracurricular and co-curricular activities is not only an important influence on civic education at the classroom level but also a necessary component.

Civic Knowledge and Intellectual Skills

While many persons might think co-curricular and extracurricular activities have a greater impact on the components of civic education that involve participatory skills and civic dispositions, these activities also serve to greatly enhance and reinforce the civic knowledge of students. The interactive nature of these activities often makes students more enthusiastic about participating in them. As a result, students are more likely to learn and remember the important civics facts and concepts that serve as a foundation for the exercise.

For example, students in one civics class in McAllen had used CCE's *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* program materials in their class, then participated in the program's national competition. This co-curricular activity strongly encourages students to deepen their knowledge of civics topics. As one of the students in the class stated, "I thought I knew it all about the Bill of Rights. After three days in this class, I figured out I didn't know anything. Now I feel I can protect myself and my family."[2] A fellow student in the class explained why the class proved so important: "We learned the same things in this class as in other civics classes, but this class instilled passion and belief. This class makes [civics] stick in your head."[3] Students were excited about the knowledge they had gained in the class, so they were more able to remember it and use it.

Indeed, students in this particular class in McAllen were often able not only to discuss their preferences for and enthusiasm toward these activities but also, perhaps more important, to explain why they thought this exercise is important. As one class member stated, "The *We the People* competition was really great for making me see both sides, seeing other people's beliefs. The competition helped us form our own opinions and see how this stuff applies to life. We could be talking to people with completely opposite points of view."[4]

Teachers in other areas of the country also discussed the importance of the development of civic knowledge and intellectual skills through co-curricular activities. As a high school teacher in New York explained, "In my U.S. history course, we acted out the Constitutional Convention. The students actually got to be James Madison. Now when we are watching the Senate [impeachment] hearings, they understand references to obscure names."[5] Another teacher in New York used an activity to accompany the curriculum in her middle school class that covered the early days of the United States. For the first half of the class period, she had students work as a class to determine what they wanted to do for the second half of the class. Students formed informal coalitions and lobbied one another for support. While the lesson certainly gave students a chance to learn how one participates in a democracy of equals, the teacher used the experience to branch into a discussion about how difficult it must have been for the colonies to reach consensus during their debates at the Continental Congress.[6]

Echoing the McAllen comments, a student in Nebraska summarized for researchers one important impact of these participatory activities: "It sticks with you longer than other stuff."[7] A student in Florida concurred, explaining, "You can read it over and over in a textbook, but when you get to put it into practice, it really comes together."[8]

By using co-curricular activities, teachers are able to make civic education effective, while at the same time making it enjoyable. As a result, as an educator in Indiana using the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* competition to complement the regular curriculum told researchers, civics courses can become so popular that "the high school kids are now petitioning to get into that class."[9]

Civic Participation

Beyond making the knowledge components of civic education easier to understand and remember, extracurricular and co-curricular activities give students the chance to develop and apply the participatory skills they will need to be engaged as citizens. Indeed, civic participation is probably the most easily identifiable aspect of civic education that is conveyed through extracurricular and co-curricular activities. As one educator stated, "We want [young people] to be responsible, but we don't put them in decision making positions. We should involve kids more in real world decisions. Kids learn by doing."[10] By participating in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, students learn how to participate as better citizens in the community by actually becoming better citizens.

Teachers are not the only ones who understand what role participatory activities can have in the formation of better citizens; students see the importance of active learning exercises as well. As one student in Nebraska told researchers, "More hours over a longer time period would get you into the habit of doing this."[11]

In addition to the many extracurricular activities that can help teach students participatory skills (see below), teachers have devised various co-curricular activities to give students experience in this area. A teacher in Albany told researchers about one particular method. Rather than offer a final exam, this teacher creates a long menu of civics activities. Students must choose several activities from the list, each of which is worth a certain number of points. Examples of the activities are writing a letter to the editor of a local newspaper, writing a letter to a political person, going to a city council meeting, and creating a campaign commercial or song. Through completing these activities, students learn how to participate in government and understand civic concepts better.[12]

Another teacher in New York uses a similar method to get students learning about and using civics concepts outside the classroom. He requires students to draw up plans for their own businesses. As a result, students have to research and understand consumer laws and individual rights, often speaking directly with state and city officials to get information. For instance, one student wanted to open a tattoo parlor and discovered, much to his surprise, that in New York one did not even need a permit for this kind of activity. Later in the semester, the same teacher has students complete a project in which they take an old shopping mall and create something useful from it. This activity requires understanding zoning laws and building requirements.[13]

Although teaching students how to participate effectively and responsibly in civic life may not always be easy or simple, activities to enhance such student participation clearly have their rewards. As one Putnam County teacher stated, "I don't know if enough attention is paid to civic participation, but it is awkward in a rural area to get involved."[14] Nevertheless, though not many opportunities are always available to him, he still tries to make sure that students learn how to get involved in their community. For instance, he gives extra credit to students who work on campaigns: "Both students and the candidates like that."[15] Students really do learn by doing; in this way, extracurricular and co-curricular activities become very important components of any district civic education initiative.

Civic Dispositions

Civic knowledge and higher-order intellectual skills are critically important qualities of an effective citizen. Knowing how to participate in the civic community is another essential characteristic. However, by themselves, these components will not result in a fully informed and engaged citizen. Programs of civic education must foster the civic dispositions that lead students to want to employ these skills. Extracurricular and co-curricular activities, because they are so interactive, engaging, and enjoyable, serve this aspect of civic education particularly well.

For instance, educators can use participatory exercises to surround students with the dispositions that pervade informed citizenship. One elementary teacher described to researchers the efforts at her school to infuse the entire curriculum with civic dispositions: "Citizenship is included in everything that we do. Last year we called the school the Double "R" Ranch, for respect and responsibility."[16]

Project researchers, in their conversations with even young students, heard how participatory activities create and affirm dispositions toward civic behavior. A Florida fourth grader said, "I like these activities because it gives us a sense of achievement that we can help people or animals or the country. It makes me feel important. I'm here, not just to learn, but to help."[17] Another Florida elementary student, in fifth grade, added, "I like to do things around the neighborhood and around the school, because I like helping."[18] Said another fourth grader, simply, "It makes me feel good that I did something."[19] Such words are powerful testimony to the deep impact the lessons of extracurricular and co-curricular activities can have.

Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities Reported in Districts

Districts, schools, and teachers employ a variety of extracurricular and co-curricular activities. In every district that project researchers visited, a diverse array of uniquely designed activities give students the opportunity to engage in the affairs of their communities. There is a heavy emphasis on community service, whether required or voluntary. Examples of student government, at all grade levels, are numerous, as are extracurricular activities related to voting or elections. In addition, several districts make use of the resources and opportunities made available by national organizations such as CCE and the Close Up Foundation.

Table 10.1 depicts the most common district-level extracurricular and co-curricular civic education activities, as reported by secondary social studies teachers in the 14 school districts that responded to the project's survey. While the table certainly does not list every activity across the country or even in these 14 districts, it illustrates well the types of extracurricular and co-curricular activities being conducted in these districts.

Table 10.1
Most Common District-Level Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities in Civic Education Reported by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

State	District	Community Service	Student Council	Voting Education/ Registration	Close Up	*We the People*	School Clubs	Speech/ Debate	Boys/ Girls State	Mock Trial
California	Long Beach			X	X					
	San Jose	X	X							X
Florida	Miami-Dade Co.	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	Leon County	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Indiana	Evansville-Vand	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Munster	X	X				X	X		
Nebraska	Lincoln	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	Raymond	X	X	X	X		X			
New York	Albany		X				X	X		X
	Niskayuna	X	X				X	X		X
Ohio	Findlay	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
	Putnam County	X	X		X		X		X	X
Texas	Austin	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
	McAllen	X	X	X		X	X			X

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: This table reports only responses to a written survey of secondary social studies teachers in these 14 districts; it does not incorporate responses from any other source.

In addition to the activities in table 10.1, each of which was cited by teachers in more than one of the 14 school districts, responses to the survey revealed numerous programs and activities that were either less common across the 14 districts or were unique to specific districts. Examples of these activities are listed in table 10.2. Again, this list is by no means exhaustive; instead, it is included simply to show the rich diversity of extracurricular and co-curricular activities used in districts, schools, and classrooms to enhance civics instruction.

Table 10.2
Additional District-Level Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities in Civic Education Reported by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

Crime/Violence Prevention	Cultural	Academic
• Crime Watch (Miami-Dade Co.) • Domestic abuse education (Miami-Dade Co.) • Drug abuse education (Miami-Dade Co.) • Graffiti clean-up (Miami-Dade Co.) • Mothers Against Drunk Driving (Miami-Dade Co.) • Police Club (Miami-Dade Co.) • Law, Youth, and Citizenship Program (Albany)	• Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade (Miami-Dade Co.) • Multicultural Fair (Lincoln) • Heritage Club (African-American Pride/Citizenship) (Miami-Dade Co.) • *History of Perry Heights* (book authored by students) (Evansville-Vanderburgh) • History Fair Program (Leon County)	• Academic Bowl (Findlay) • Brain Bowl (Leon County) • Key Club (Leon County, Findlay, McAllen) • Model United Nations (Leon County, Findlay, Austin) • National Honor Society (Findlay, Austin)

Environmental	Peer Tutoring, Mentoring, and Mediation	Other
• School beautification (Evansville-Vanderburgh) • Highway clean-up (Raymond, Putnam Co.) • Recycling Club (San Jose, Miami-Dade Co.)	• Peace Colors (Long Beach) • Peer Tutors (Leon County, Niskayuna, Austin) • Teen Court (Long Beach, Leon County) • Big Buddies (Austin)	• Team Leadership (Austin) • Blood Drive (Munster) • Essay Contest (Lincoln) • School Decision Making Team (Niskayuna)

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

Clearly, there is a wide variety of extracurricular and co-curricular activities in which students can learn how to be better citizens in the future while becoming more involved in the community and school in the present. Nevertheless, different programs influence students' civic knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and dispositions in different ways. The following sections look more closely at extracurricular and co-curricular programs that deal with community service, student government, and voting to examine the impact each of these popular activities can have. Finally, three specific program examples are highlighted to provide further insight into the role extracurricular and co-curricular activities play in civic education.

Community Service

Discussions with teachers and researchers about community service and service learning requirements provided insight into the value that states, districts, and schools place on civic participation, whereas conversations with students about their perceptions of and experiences with community service and service learning suggest that this form of extracurricular activity can be particularly effective in fostering civic dispositions. As a sixth grader from Florida stated simply and succinctly, "If no one did community service, we'd be in much worse shape."[20]

Many students recognize the importance of citizen involvement in our society and participate in some kind of volunteer work. Through the initiative taken by teachers, individual students, or school organizations, students conduct fund-raising efforts for various causes; work at hospitals, nursing homes, and drug rehabilitation centers; volunteer on election campaigns; conduct food and clothing drives; and assist such community groups as environmental organizations, the Humane Society, and Habitat for Humanity. In Florida, for example, students at two schools visited by project researchers participated in schoolwide efforts to send food and medical supplies to Latin American countries that had suffered from damage from Hurricane Mitch.[21]

In many instances, students are required, either by the school district or by the teacher for a particular class, to participate in community service. Indeed, combining teachers' survey responses with findings from the on-site visits, researchers discovered that students in all 14 districts face a community service mandate of some type, either through districtwide requirements or through mandatory co-curricular requirements in a particular class.[22]

As noted in table 6.5, districtwide community service requirements can be found statewide at the high school level in Lincoln, San Jose, and Miami-Dade County.[23] In Lincoln, seniors in the district are required to complete 20 hours of community service before graduating. Students fulfill the requirement in their Citizenship Issues course, linking their community service with the civics content in the course. Although some may think the inclusion of community service requirements to enhance school curricula is a recent policy phenomenon, Lincoln's requirement has been in effect since the early 1980s.[24]

San Jose Unified School District implemented its community service requirement for graduation in 1988. Specifically, the district requires students to give a total of 40 hours, or 10 hours per year, during their high school years. Interestingly, teachers and students at all grade levels are aware of the high school community service requirement, but teachers at the San Jose high school that project researchers visited indicated that their school had not widely organized or advertised the program and that students had yet to begin finding service projects.[25]

In Long Beach, community service requirements were implemented by teachers for certain courses, including Law & Government, World Cultures, a sociology course, and courses devoted specifically to community service. For example, one teacher at a high school in Long Beach instituted a program at his school more than 11 years ago that 3 years ago became an official class, entitled Community Service/School to Work.[26]

A Findlay teacher shared the underlying philosophy of the social studies department: "We believe in applying social studies through community service."[27] In the high school class World Cultures, 15 hours of community service are required, about which students must keep a journal.[28] The teachers "think this relates strongly to being a good citizen."[29]

Some teachers, including elementary and middle school teachers, reported that community service, although not required, is encouraged. In several instances, students can receive extra credit for doing community service. For example, in Raymond, where community service is not required, high school students can make up for absences by performing community service.[30]

Community service activities not only offer students opportunities to actively participate in the affairs of their community but also forge important partnerships between the schools and local organizations and frequently enhance students' civic education. Some of the partner organizations noted by teachers in their survey responses are listed in table 10.3. The numbers in the table indicate the number of districts (of the 14 surveyed) in which teachers identified that particular group.

Table 10.3
Examples of District-Level Community Groups Involved in Civic Education Reported by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

Group	Number of Districts in Which Teachers Noted Group's Involvement
Parent/Teacher Association	9
League of Women Voters	9
State/Local Bar Association	6
Rotary Club	6
American Legion	5
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	5
Kiwanis	4
Local Business	4
Police Department	3
Chamber of Commerce	2
Junior Achievement	2
Lions Club	2
YMCA	2
Elks	1
Optimist Club	1

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

Community service and service learning programs get students involved in civic life, and they get civic organizations involved in students' lives. Nevertheless, despite the benefits that have been identified by proponents, support for community service extracurricular and co-curricular activities is not unanimous.

For instance, in Lincoln, where community service is required, parents often file complaints with the district concerning the time strain this requirement puts on their children. The Lincoln Public Schools social studies consultant told researchers that the issue is on the department chair meeting agenda every month. Moreover, she worries that students often wait until the last minute to fulfill the service requirement, only to have their parents informed that they will not be allowed to graduate. Nevertheless, the district sees the program as valuable despite its administrative and communication problems.[31]

Some students and teachers disagree with the concept of requiring community service. One teacher in San Jose, a district with a community service requirement, stated, "Service is not service if it is required."[32] Elaborating on that teacher's opinion, a San Jose fifth grader asserted that prep schools and colleges like to see community service on a student's record, so sometimes students participate without developing civic dispositions: "Instead of doing it for someone else, you do it for your own good."[33] Some of the San Jose fifth graders suggested that the high schools not make community service mandatory but, rather, give students a list of volunteer opportunities to encourage voluntarism.[34]

Teachers in other parts of the country also raised concerns about mandatory community service. For instance, a survey respondent from Austin commented, "I used to think this was a good idea until I realized that it violates some civil rights of students."[35] Similarly, a teacher from Niskayuna responded, "Requiring participation would violate their interpretation of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments."[36]

Students from other parts of the country also agreed with their peers in San Jose. For instance, a student from Lincoln, who had to fulfill district community service requirements in order to graduate, objected on principle to required community service: "The point of volunteering is to volunteer. If we have to do it, then it's not voluntary."[37]

However, such dissenting opinions were in the minority among the views reported to project researchers. Many other students remarked to project researchers on the importance of community service and service learning. For example, one student in Ohio said, "It's important to be involved in the community."[38] Another Ohio student declared, "I think requiring community service is a good thing."[39] Students from Lincoln concurred. One student pointed out that volunteering is "a skill you need to learn, just like reading is."[40] Students see voluntarism as a necessary part of civic education: "Community service helps us learn to be good citizens."[41] Another added, "Without forced volunteering, you might never see what's out there that you could do. Besides, most people realize that they really like it after they do it."[42]

Indeed, many students with whom project researchers spoke did not see community service as something separate and removed from the rest of their lives. For instance, students at an Ohio high school initially reported that they do not carry out any community service. Instead, they talked about the ways in which they volunteer around the school or help out their neighbors. One young man said, "People just help out because it's a small town. It's just something you like to do."[43] Another student at the same high school commented on both the importance of community service and the need to make it part of much of what one does, saying "It should be a way of life."[44]

In summary, community service and service learning activities provide students with a strong sense of accomplishment and the development of civic dispositions that lead them to stay involved. Most students seem to recognize that these activities are opportunities to participate in the affairs of their communities, as well as effective and enjoyable ways to link civics curricula and courses with practical service learning in the community.

Student Government

Student government gives all students, as "citizens" of their schools, direct experience in selecting their representatives and influencing school and classroom decisions. Indeed, project researchers observed instances of student government at nearly every school visited, including elementary, middle, and high schools. Students not only participate in community service projects through student government but also learn about leadership, bureaucracy, and citizen decision making processes.

Although it is often difficult to discern to what degree student councils are truly active and engaged in their schools' management and to what degree most students participate in student councils' activities, their existence represents a significant way in which civic participation is personally experienced by students. Student government, when effective and open, enables students to engage actively in the governance of their school communities.

Although perhaps not consciously associated with civic education, student government is a vital component of civic education. Many of the other extracurricular and co-curricular activities associated with civic education are often hypothetical or theoretical in nature. Effective student governments, in contrast, offer students opportunities to address, analyze, and design solutions to actual problems facing their school communities. As a high school senior in Indiana stated, "One of the implicit elements of our education with regard to civics in high school is that we have learned to operate within the framework of a bureaucracy. We are learning to play the game. So I think that's part of civic education. It is something you learn outside the classroom."[45] The process of student governance offers students firsthand experience in self-governance and makes them aware of the impact of their own decisions and policies.

Voting

Another very important and popular extracurricular activity gives students the opportunity to participate in the most concrete expression of citizenship in a democracy, namely, voting. For instance, the most popular activity researchers encountered in Leon County is an initiative called Kids Voting. Kids Voting is a national program to "boost voter participation among adults and to get kids in the habit of voting."[46] Students register to vote in and learn about upcoming federal, state, and local elections in their schools. On election day, they accompany their parents to the polls, where there is a special voting booth set up for youth. Students' votes are tallied and announced on the news when the election returns are announced. Teachers at all three schools in Leon County visited by project researchers reported that they and their students were involved in Kids Voting before the November 1998 elections.[47]

Kids Voting also highlights the importance of support from community partners that enable schools to offer such co-curricular programs. In 1998, Kids Voting in Leon County was organized, in large part, by the *Tallahassee Democrat*. This local newspaper provided funding and instructional materials to assist teachers and students with the implementation of the program.

Students were eager to discuss with project researchers not only why they like Kids Voting but, perhaps more significantly, why they think it is important. For example, one fifth-grade student explained, "During the election we learned about voting. This is important, because when you get old enough to vote, you need to understand issues and you have to choose well. You have to vote understanding what you think would help the state."[48] A seventh grader noted simply, "We are taught that voting is an important part of citizenship."[49]

These types of co-curricular activities often produce benefits reaching far beyond the classroom. The community relations manager of the *Tallahassee Democrat* told researchers, "We have anecdotal evidence about parents who registered to vote for the first time because their kids were involved in Kids Voting."[50] The teachers at Leon High School pointed out that Leon County was fifth in the state in voter turnout. They believe that Kids Voting had an important role in getting the parents to the polls.[51]

Lincoln also partners with community volunteers and the local business community to offer a voting-focused program for its students. KFOR, a local radio station, provides a great deal of support and publicity for the Student Vote project.[52] Most of the elementary schools in the district participate. Students vote for candidates running in local, state, and federal campaigns. The student elections take place the week before the actual elections. One student at each school acts as the election commissioner for that school. Students have debates on the candidates, and actual voting booths and ballot boxes are used. In conjunction with interested adults, many of whom come from the local business community, students prepare newsletters for other students explaining campaign issues so that all student voters can make informed decisions. The community takes Student Vote quite seriously, as the final tally often serves as an accurate prediction of how adults will vote in the real election a few days later.[53]

Indeed, during a recent U.S. Senate election, Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey came to speak to elementary school students at the school in his neighborhood as a part of the Student Vote program.[54] In addition to looking at candidates, students at each school also choose a school issue of interest. Past issues have included adopting and supporting zoo animals and researching proposed changes to a neighborhood park.

In several of the school districts visited by researchers, schools are actively engaged in registering eligible high school students to vote. Lincoln is one such school district.[55] Raymond and Long Beach also register students to vote. Students at Findlay High School talked with researchers about how their teachers facilitate registration of students to vote.[56]

In Miami-Dade County Public Schools, "The importance of voting is reinforced during the annual Student Voter Registration Drive sponsored each spring by the Division of Social Sciences. During the drive, eligible senior high school students are registered to vote in social studies classes. During the 1997-98 school year, 9,362 students were registered to vote. Since 1972-73, 165,760 students have been registered to vote. Support for this program is received from Kids Voting, the League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County, and the Miami-Dade County Elections Department."[57]

These voting registration and education programs offer several benefits. Rhetoric concerning the importance of citizenship is reinforced through concrete voter registration efforts. Registering students to vote offers a real progression from civic values and responsibilities to an act of citizenship. Voting education programs offer students the opportunity to learn, discuss, and debate issues affecting them and their communities. The knowledge and experiences students acquire through these activities develop the concept of citizenship into real-life practice.

Close Up

This nationally recognized program, organized by the Close Up Foundation, offers high school students the opportunity to combine in-class academic learning about government with practical learning activities. The culmination of the program is a trip to Washington, D.C., where students are offered the opportunity to see and interact, firsthand, with representatives of the various branches of government.[58] As one teacher in Nebraska told researchers, "Close Up provides the kids an opportunity both to see government "work" and to see how they fit into their government."[59]

Of the districts in which teachers responded to project surveys, the following six districts reported student involvement in Close Up: Long Beach, Miami-Dade County, Evansville-Vanderburgh, Lincoln, Raymond, and Austin.

The Close Up teacher coordinator at Raymond Central High School explains the importance of a program like Close Up to a small, rural district such as Raymond:

> In a small town like Raymond, it's easy for students to become content with not knowing what's going on in the world. It's difficult for our students to understand how government, outside of Raymond, has an effect on their lives.[60]

The process by which students facilitate their own participation creates the need for interaction with their communities. The students are provided partial funding in order to participate in Close Up, but they are expected to raise a majority of the needed funds themselves, through school-based fund-raising activities.[61]

The benefits of combining education in the process of governance with firsthand experiences and interaction with government officials are obvious. Close Up and other such nationally recognized programs also highlight the importance of local districts' partnerships with outside organizations in order to augment existing educational resources.

We the People Competitions

We the People... Project Citizen is a nationally recognized program sponsored by the Center for Civic Education (CCE) for middle school students that promotes competent and informed participation in state and local government. (Appendix A summarizes CCE programs and publications.) It actively engages students in learning how to monitor and influence public policy.[62] *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* is a nationally recognized program focusing on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights for upper elementary, middle, and high school students. Both of these CCE programs culminate with interactive activities and competitions that give students the opportunity to participate in civics activities on a local, state, and national level while become acquainting with other students from across their state and the entire country.

In some social studies classrooms, *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* and *We the People... Project Citizen* practically serve as the foundation for learning civics. For example, in Lincoln, one teacher described to researchers how he uses *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* extensively. He first used it in 1987, when CCE sent him the materials. In 1989, he and some of his students participated in the mock hearing competition and won the national title. After those kinds of experiences, "the kids are hooked," and the school has been competing ever since.[63] This teacher gets other teachers and former students to help. About 30 students per year participate in six teams or units, but the selection of who participates is not entirely open; as he says, "they have to be in the right class."[64] The competition is extracurricular, but the *We the People* program materials are now ordered by the district for use in all civics classes. (See chapter 7 for a more extensive discussion of the use of *We the People* materials as supplements to more traditional instructional materials.)

In McAllen, students participate in the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* competition as a result of a teacher's decision to use these program materials as a foundation for the civics curriculum. Students in McAllen shared with project researchers how *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* reinforces the importance of civics for students. Said one student, "From *We the People*, I learned how when the country was made, the Founding Fathers knew that ignorant people could be dangerous, how by not knowing civics, we're dangerous to the country. The decisions we make should have thought. We should be voting for something in particular."[65] Another student was equally appreciative of this CCE program: "The *We the People* competition was really great for making me see both sides, seeing other people's beliefs. The competition helped us form our own opinions and see how this stuff applies to life. We could be talking to people with completely opposite points of view."[66]

In evaluating extracurricular and co-curricular activities, perhaps their real value lies in how well participating students are able to identify and acquire knowledge that transfers into general skills for lifelong informed citizenship. One McAllen student, in particular, enthusiastically displayed this insight, explaining, "What I've learned from *We the People* is going to help in business. I've learned that monarchies don't work. You can't just rule. You have to treat everyone fair. Even in big corporations, you have a government. So what we've learned applies to business. And the teamwork I've learned will help, too."[67]

S.C.A.L.E.S. Project

Leon County schools offer a unique example of a combination of extracurricular and co-curricular activities, namely, the S.C.A.L.E.S. Project. S.C.A.L.E.S. stands for Strengthening Citizenship and Law Education in Society. The executive director of the project explained to researchers the underlying philosophy behind it: "Our country underutilizes kids as human resources for solving problems. We want them to be responsible, but we don't put them in decision making positions. We should involve kids more in real-world decisions."[68]

S.C.A.L.E.S. has four program areas: Teen Court, Court Procedures/Law Class, Internship Program, and Curricula Infusion. The programs are funded primarily by a three-dollar court cost included in all criminal trials and civil penalties in the county, which generates approximately $70,000 a year. The project's executive director reported that students involved in the program helped to get a state law passed authorizing this type of funding for teen courts around the state. Other funding comes from grants, the school district, and local business contributors.[69]

The Teen Court program is a court for first-time misdemeanor teen offenders. In order to have their cases deferred from the regular courts, the teenagers must be willing to plead guilty and have parent involvement and transportation. Teen Court handles the sentencing portion of the cases. The judges are practicing lawyers and real judges, but the court's lawyers and jury members are all teenagers. There were over 2,000 jury volunteers last year. The defendant is the only witness, and he or she gives a deposition with the S.C.A.L.E.S. staff before the trial.

The S.C.A.L.E.S. Project's executive director believes that Teen Court is successful, because the kids are receptive to the moral voice of their peers. "Teen court is not just sentencing. It's about kids saying to other kids that what they're doing is wrong." [70] Teen Court has a (very low) eight percent recidivism rate. It is possible, of course, that this low rate could be partially attributed to the fact that Teen Court participants are a self-selecting group. Nevertheless, it is clear that this program is successfully using reinforcement from peers to inculcate many students with appropriate civic dispositions.

High-achieving students from Leon County and surrounding districts' high schools take the Court Procedures/Law Class. The class is held for one full day each week. The class involves studying cases and court procedures, going to court, and putting on mock trials. It is also taught in a three-week summer course. The class counts as one high school semester credit.[71]

The Internship Program matches high school students with law-related professionals for 75-hour summer internships. The internship also counts as one high school semester credit and is intended to give students "real-world knowledge and experience."[72]

Finally, Curricula Infusion includes a wide variety of projects to support citizenship and law education throughout all the schools of Leon County. The S.C.A.L.E.S. Project's executive director stated that in pursuit of this goal, the district has been involved in Kids Voting, mock trials in classrooms and on the district competition level, programs with the local Girl Scouts, teacher training, and student teacher training. In addition, the district has been supporting a peer court at a middle school and working with juvenile felony offenders. This S.C.A.L.E.S. Project is also working with the Neighborhood Justice Center to establish conflict resolution programs in schools.[73]

In an important note of caution, the project's director told researchers that he believes his four programs are successful but that they could be used far more broadly in the district. " The programs that I organize are good, but many times the teachers aren't interested in them, because they are overwhelmed and they focus on what is tested."[74] Nevertheless, the S.C.A.L.E.S. Project is a powerful testament to the impact an extracurricular activity can have.

Conclusions

The Florida high school student's statement noted earlier may offer the most succinct and powerful summary to the chapter: " You can read it over and over in a textbook, but when you get to put it into practice, it really comes together."[75] The numerous examples of extracurricular and co-curricular activities, along with the perceptions of students and professionals of these activities, overwhelmingly support the view that extracurricular and co-curricular activities have a critical role to play in civic education. These interactive, participatory programs, whether or not they are tied formally to the classroom curriculum, provide a necessary complement to classroom curricular efforts to enhancing students' understanding of citizenship by linking their civic knowledge to practical experience.

Indeed, the enthusiasm and articulation with which students discussed these activities with project researchers suggest a certain level of success. Of course, one might counter that students favor extracurricular and co-curricular activities only because they are fun and interactive. As this chapter has shown, however, criticism of an activity simply because students find it enjoyable may not even be a valid point, because the enthusiasm these activities engender seems to lead naturally to students who are more likely to understand and retain concepts in civic knowledge. Moreover, such a conclusion ignores the foundational significance of such activities. Time and again, project researchers noted the ability of students not only to describe why they enjoy extracurricular and co-curricular activities but also to explain why these exercises are important to the development of their own civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This ability to articulate the meaning behind these activities speaks very well to such activities' effectiveness. Ultimately, the strength of extracurricular and co-curricular activities in fostering students' civic education lies in these programs' ability to get students to use and reinforce their acquired civic knowledge, while fostering students' civic dispositions through engaging them in participatory civic exercises.

Recommendations

These project findings lead to the following recommendations for using extracurricular and co-curricular activities to improve civic education practices.

1. *School districts and schools should solicit community resources to provide financial and other support for extracurricular and co-curricular activities and the teachers who coordinate them.* The obvious value of extracurricular and co-curricular activities to teachers and students should not be ignored because of a lack of funding. In the wake of diminishing public financial resources available to schools, the need for schools to build and facilitate partnerships within communities is increased. These partnerships not only can facilitate the actual implementation of programs but also can provide financial and other incentives for teachers to undertake coordination of such programs. As researchers were reminded by teachers in Nebraska, not every school has teachers willing to take on extracurricular activities; additional incentive funding would help alleviate this problem, as would additional assistance from members of community organizations.[76] Nebraska's Student Vote and Florida's Kid Voting programs are examples of the importance of forming key partnerships with private sector and community organizations to offer popular and effective extracurricular activities. Districts desiring teachers to initiate these activities should encourage them through securing funding and providing program support, including time, material, and transportation costs.

2. *Schools need to ensure that extracurricular and co-curricular civic activities are available to the entire student body.* Honors classes are often more heavily populated by groups that also are traditionally more active in the polity. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that students in nonhonors classes are more in need of civic empowerment. As one Florida high school student frankly stated, "The majority of the people in civics-related activities are in honors and AP classes."[77] Participatory activities are so vital a complement to a program of civic education that schools need to make sure that these initiatives reach out and engage all students.

3. *School districts and schools, in collaboration with CCE coordinators, should seek to expand teacher and school participation in national programs such as the two* We the People *programs and the Close Up program.* The level of enthusiasm, knowledge, and articulation students display regarding these programs is often overwhelming. It is clear that these programs, in particular, are extremely effective at stimulating students' awareness of the affairs of their communities and their desire to participate actively. Moreover, these programs are able to call on national resources and experiences to help schools in their civic education efforts. Especially in rural districts, with limited resources available to create new programs, the materials and technical support provided through these national programs are invaluable. These programs also incorporate quality, interactive field trips that make use of the courthouse, state capitol, and other important civics sites to provide invaluable learning experiences for students, thereby enabling students to have the diversity of civics activities they deserve. As a student in Raymond said, "We need

to go on more interesting field trips.... Don't just take us and show us the buildings and the pictures on the walls."[78]

Notes

[1] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with High School Seniors, Newburgh, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[2] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Students, Memorial High School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Mary Warden, High School Teacher, Niskayuna High School, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[6] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Karen Haupt, U.S. History Teacher, Haskett Middle School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[7] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Students, Raymond Central High School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[8] Interviews by Greg Litt with High School Students, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[9] Interview by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Cathy Bomberger, CCE Congressional District Coordinator, School Town of Munster, Munster, Indiana, January 21, 1999.

[10] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Russell H. Landry, Executive Director, S.C.A.L.E.S. Project, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[11] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Students, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[12] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Pete Sarinelli, High School Teacher, Albany High School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[13] Interview by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with Nick Petraccione, High School Teacher, Niskayuna High School, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[14] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teacher, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Elementary School Teachers, W.T. Moore Elementary School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Sixth-Grade Students, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[21] Ibid.; and interview by Greg Litt with High School Students, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[22] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Karen Stanley, Social Studies Consultant, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[25] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with High School Social Studies Teachers, Gunderson High School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 24, 1999.

[26] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Quentin Wood, Social Studies Teacher, Lakewood High School, Long Beach Unified School District, Lakewood, California, February 25, 1999.

[27] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[28] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with 12th-Grade Social Studies Students, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[29] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Social Studies Teachers, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[30] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with 12th-Grade Social Studies Students, Raymond Central High School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[31] Stanley interview.

[32] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Bobbie Gilchrist, Fifth-Grade Teacher, Williams Elementary School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[33] Interviews by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Fifth-Grade Students, Williams Elementary School, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[34] Ibid.

[35] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Students, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[38] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Sixth-Grade Social Studies Students, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[39] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with 12th-Grade Social Studies Students, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[40] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with High School Social Studies Students, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with High School Students, Putnam County Schools, Putnam County, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with High School Seniors, School Town of Munster, Munster, Indiana, January 22, 1999.

[46] Kids Voting, *Support the Future: Kids Voing USA, Florida-Leon County,* Tallahassee, Florida, n.d., n.p. (pamphlet).

[47] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Middle School Teacher, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999; Elementary School Teachers, W.T. Moore Elementary School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999; and interview by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with High School Teachers, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[48] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Elementary School Students, W.T. Moore Elementary School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[49] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Seventh-Grade Students, Fairview Middle School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[50] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Peggy Durham, Community Relations Manager, *Tallahassee Democrat*, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[51] Interviews by Nicoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with High School Teachers, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[52] Stanley interview.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with 12th-Grade Social Studies Students, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[57] Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Division of Social Sciences, "Voter Education, Civic Education, and the Competency-Based Curriculum" (Miami, Florida, July 16, 1998), p. 1 (memorandum).

[58] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Dale Rasmussen, Social Studies Teacher; and Susan Schraeder, Current Issues Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Dale Rasmussen, Social Studies Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[61] Rasmussen and Schraeder interviews.

[62] Center for Civic Education, *K-12 Curricular Materials*, Calabasas, California, n.d., n.p. (catalog).

[63] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Ted Larson, Social Studies Teacher, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Students, Memorial High School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Landry interview.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Interviews by Greg Litt with High School Students, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[76] Rasmussen and Schraeder interviews.

[77] Interviews by Greg Litt with High School Students, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[78] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with 12th-Grade Students, Raymond Central High School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

Chapter 11. Influences of Organizations, Individuals, and Funding on Civic Education at the District Level

Chapters 6 through 10 examine the influences of various policies and practices on civic education at the district level. This chapter discusses the influences of organizations and individuals on the teaching of civics topics. In particular, it focuses on the links between the different administrative levels of the U.S. public education system and how these levels affect the form and quality of the teaching of civics topics. The chapter also looks at organizations not directly related to the education hierarchy that, nevertheless, exert influence on civic education practices at the district level. It then considers the individual influences of teachers and students. The last factor considered is funding, because it often signals the priority many of these groups and individuals place on civic education. The chapter concludes by drawing all these factors together to consider where corrective action is most needed and where it will have the greatest positive impact.

This chapter builds, as do chapters 6 through 10, on insights and information gained through on-site visits to 13 school districts in seven states across the country. During these visits, project researchers met with state, district, and school administrators; teachers; students; university faculty in teacher education programs; and other community members. In addition, researchers distributed written surveys to teachers in all 13 districts plus one additional district in Texas. (The "Framework for Analysis and Methodology" section in chapter 6 presents a fuller discussion of the districts' selection and visitations, plus the secondary social studies teacher survey.)

Influence of Administrative Structures

In the United States, state and district education hierarchies traditionally hold the strongest influence over education policy. These administrative structures influence almost every major input and decision regarding public education in the United States. State and district education administrations in most states make important decisions concerning hiring, professional development, funding, standards and curricula, instructional materials, assessment, and time allocated to different academic subjects. Although state governments and local school boards may be able to mandate education policy, they typically rely on the education bureaucracies to implement and interpret these policies. Similarly, although teachers have the greatest direct impact on students, education bureaucracies are responsible for setting standards for teachers' professional development and for hiring individual teachers.

A major difference among states is the degree of state versus local control of education policy. In addition to relative differences in the decision making authority of states and districts, some states and districts further devolve many individual education policy decisions to the schools. This site-based management approach has been gaining advocates over the last decade, granting greater decision making authority to principals, teachers, and, occasionally, parents and students.

The project survey completed by secondary social studies teachers in the 14 districts asked teachers to rank the importance of six individual and organizational actors in their influence on the actual civic education curricula in schools. These agents were the state departments of education, state legislatures, school districts, school social studies coordinators, school principals, and individual teachers. Table 11.1 shows the compiled results. For each state, a rank of " 1" in a column indicates the responding teachers in that state reported that this actor is the most influential, whereas a rank of " 6" in a column means that responding teachers regard this individual or organization as the least influential.

Table 11.1
Influence of Six Actors on School Civic Education Curricula Reported by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

State	Individual Teachers	School Social Studies Coordinators	School Principals	School Districts	State Departments of Education	State Legislatures
California	1	2	4	3	5	6
Florida	4	3	6	2	1	5
Indiana	1	2	4	3	5	6
Nebraska	2	3	5	1	4	6
New York	3	2	6	4	1	5
Ohio	1	3	6	2	4	5
Texas	3	2	6	1	4	5
All Teachers	1	3	6	2	4	5

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: For each state, a rank of " 1" indicates greatest perceived influence; a rank of " 6" indicates least perceived influence.

As table 11.1 suggests, teachers in different states assign varied levels of importance to comparable individuals and organizations. For example, although the state departments of education were rated relatively low in five states, they were rated the agents with the most influence in Florida and New York. Overall, teachers rated themselves the most important actors influencing civics curricula in schools, but teachers in Florida, Texas, and New York were rated below school social studies coordinators. It is interesting to note that, despite the attention they draw, state legislatures and school principals received the lowest ratings from teachers in terms of perceived influence on school civic education curricula. Moreover, when the teacher surveys are tallied as a whole, state departments of education do relatively poorly, coming in fourth, behind teachers, school districts, and school social studies coordinators.

State Departments of Education

Levels of state control over education district policies and practices vary considerably across the nation. States are often responsible for setting standards for professional development and teacher certification. They also develop state curricula and content standards. Along with developing standards, state departments of education in many states have mandates to develop statewide, standardized assessment tests. In states with centralized textbook-adoption policies, the states decide which textbooks it will fund, effectively limiting textbook choices for districts, schools, and teachers.

Perhaps the most powerful tool state administrations currently use to influence education in their states is statewide assessment. (See chapter 8 for a discussion of the influence of statewide assessment.) According to a recent *Education Week* article, 39 states currently mandate tests aligned with their states' standards.[1] Of the states visited by project researchers, six currently have mandated tests in at least one academic subject, while the seventh, Nebraska, is moving in that direction. Teachers and administrators suggest that changes in testing policies could affect everything from the amount of time allotted to a subject to the specific content taught in a specific subject. Testing has most negatively affected civic education in states that have chosen to test a group of core subjects, often math and reading, while neglecting to test social studies or, in particular, civics. A Florida educator punctuated the message sent by these policies, stating, "There hasn't been an emphasis from the state level in civics. They emphasize science, math, and reading. As long as [students] pass the test [in these subjects], we don't care if they're good citizens."[2] On the opposite end of this testing spectrum is Ohio, which specifically tests citizenship in its Ninth Grade Proficiency Test. A teacher in Ohio pointed out that "since there is a citizenship assessment test, I do not feel that civics takes a back seat to other subjects."[3]

In states without centralized assessments, the power of state education administrations to affect classroom practices is significantly weaker. Although most states have created and disseminated social studies standards that include civics topics, teachers can more easily ignore the standards in nontesting states; assessment tests seem to be the only systematic method in use to monitor the content taught in classrooms. Absent a statewide assessment, state departments of education lose a very powerful tool.

Nevertheless, states without standardized student assessments can still influence teachers through certification requirements, the provision of professional development opportunities, textbook selection, targeted funding, and course and content requirements. In states with strong state control of curricula, for example, mandating that students take one year rather than one-half year of government at the high school level can significantly affect the time a high school student spends studying civics.

Still, use of this policy tool highlights a difficulty that nontesting states have in affecting content. While changing the number of courses high school students must have to graduate will affect the quantity of time they spend on a subject, it does little to dictate the content of the course. Further, this influence is generally not available to administrators wishing to affect practices at the elementary school level, where there generally are not discrete times set aside for specific courses such as civics or social studies.

In a state with historically strong local control and no state testing, the state administration's ability to influence actual education practices and content is very limited. For instance, a curriculum coordinator for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction summarized how removed a state department of education can become from influencing what actually happens in the classroom: "I think civics is something imbued in the lower grades and continues right on through high school. The state does nothing, in particular, to foster this."[4] In such states, state officials often are influential only through voluntary acceptance of their suggestions, ideas, and funding. Of these three, funding may be the most important, as a state with no authority over individual schools and districts can still positively affect civic education through funding extracurricular activities, professional development programs, instructional materials, and curricular initiatives.

Researchers discovered that the absence of a highly influential state department of education combined with a higher degree of local control can prove beneficial for civic education. As a district social studies coordinator in a traditionally more decentralized state (Nebraska) told researchers, "We have the freedom to really develop a system that reflects the community we're in, but we also have a responsibility to look outside, too."[5] Greater local control diminishes the likelihood that civics will be marginalized solely because of unfavorable or negligent policies toward the subject at the state level, such as a statewide assessment program that excludes civics content.

When teachers were asked how familiar they are with their states' standards for civic education, over half (104 of 200) suggested that they were "somewhat" to "not at all" familiar with them.[6] (Table 6.3 gives the average level of familiarity for each state.) Unfortunately, in many cases state departments of education seem to have contributed to the perception that they have little importance or influence over everyday curricular decisions. In several states, including Texas, New York, California, and Florida, project researchers encountered varying degrees of cynicism toward state education administrations. Some respondents expressed concern about what they see as a seemingly endless stream of reforms and changes made at the state level. As a Texas high school teacher explained, "It's so political at the state level. I don't care what the state says or what the [standards] say; every few years they'll spend millions of dollars to change the standards. We were running through hoops for the end-of-course exams. Now it's [standardized tests for] social studies at the 11th grade. Nothing ever changes."[7]

In several states, researchers observed difficulties that state administrations have had in communicating new reforms or program ideas, and the rationale behind them, to districts, schools, and teachers. As a most striking example of this, at an Albany high school located a few blocks from the state education department's building, teachers were confused about the structure of the state's assessment exams.[8] Such poor communication only adds to the challenges state departments of education face in influencing district and school activity.

School District Administrations

Usually, the most influential responsibilities held by school district administrations include curriculum development, textbook decisions, funding, and hiring. Although the precise hierarchical structure and distribution of these responsibilities differ among U.S. school districts, district administrators explicitly make these decisions or hire, supervise, and evaluate the school administrators who do. It is doubtful that any level of the education hierarchy possesses more potential, if not real, influence than the central administrations of the nation's school districts. Consequently, it is a level to which organizations seeking to improve and influence civic education nationwide should give significant attention when deciding where to most effectively focus their efforts.

Although many states have created standards, it is often district administrators or groups of teachers (and occasionally parents and students), led by district administrators, who develop the civics curricula and course content. District administrators also frequently set course sequencing, particularly when these courses and their sequencing are not specifically mandated by the states. Thus, districts are often responsible for deciding whether a year or semester of government is required in their high schools. Further, they often decide or significantly influence whether students take the course before their senior year.

General funding allocations and funding priorities are often decided at the district level. Although some districts actively encourage their schools to use site-based management practices, this is not yet the norm. Further, even if specific allocation of funding is left to the many school administrations, often districts still control funding for districtwide professional development, districtwide extracurricular activities, and funding for program support of teachers in specific content areas. A teacher in McAllen described the feeling of many social studies teachers in districts where social sciences are not a priority: "Sure, we get help when we ask, but social studies is the stepchild of the district—no workroom, no funding. They've even separated us and moved us throughout the building." [9] Clearly, district administrations' power to influence the environment and attitudes surrounding a particular learning area (e.g., civics) in the district's many schools is palpable.

As a result, teachers perceive the district to be an important link from their classroom to the district and state rules and regulations that govern their rights and responsibilities in the classroom. The project survey of secondary social studies teachers asked, "When you have a question or concern regarding state or district civic standards and curricula, to whom do you go?" The results, as shown in table 11.2, illustrate the importance of districts as a link between teachers and the rest of the education policymaking world. Similar to table 11.1, for each state, a rank of "1" in a column indicates the responding teachers in that state reported that this actor is the most helpful in answering their questions regarding state and district civic education standards and curricula, whereas a rank of "6" in a column indicates the actor is the least helpful.

Table 11.2
Helpfulness of Six Actors in Answering Teachers' Questions Regarding State and District Civic Education Standards and Curricula

State	Other Teachers	School Social Studies Coordinators	School Principals	District Social Studies Coordinators	State Departments of Education	State Standards
California	1	2	3	4	n/a	n/a
Florida	3	1	5	2	4	6
Indiana	3	2	4t	1	4t	4t
Nebraska	5	2	4	1	3	6
New York	3	2	5t	1	5t	4
Ohio	n/a	2	3	1	4	n/a
Texas[1]	3	1t	4t	1t	4t	4t
All Teachers	3	2	5	1	4	6

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

Notes: For each state, a rank of "1" indicates greatest perceived helpfulness; a rank of "6" indicates least perceived helpfulness. A "t" indicates a tie with another actor in the level of helpfulness for teachers in that state, while "n/a" indicates that no teacher in that state responded in that category.

[1] In Texas, two survey respondents indicated that they address their questions to the Director, Office of Law-Related Education Programs, State Bar of Texas, Austin, Texas.

As table 11.2 shows, district social studies coordinators were the most frequently cited source of advice about standards and curricula in five of the seven states surveyed. For the entire survey group, this group was listed as the most helpful source of advice and answers. School social studies coordinators were also very helpful sources of information, as were other teachers. Notably, although the question specifically refers to state standards, teachers did not list state departments of education and the standards themselves as particularly helpful sources of information.

As table 11.2 suggests, the district social studies coordinators are very helpful to individual teachers. Indeed, in several of the districts they visited, project researchers noted the positive effect dedicated social studies coordinators can have. Strong social studies coordinators can be very powerful allies of civic education. Unfortunately, poor funding, a lack of administrative support, and perceptions that social studies subjects are less important than reading, mathematics, and science can marginalize social studies coordinators' ability to support teachers. Even in districts with remarkably strong, dynamic district social studies coordinators, some teachers suggested that these coordinators are isolated from district decision making.[10]

School Administrations

School administrators can substantially influence civic education practices within their schools. Much of their ability to influence teaching practices in schools comes from their control of resources. Not only do school administrators have the ability to allocate funding for curricular and extracurricular activities, they often have the authority to allocate time dedicated to subjects and extracurricular activities. This authority is especially critical at the elementary school level, where more flexible schedules allow subject content to be either highlighted or ignored.

As the lead school administrator, a principal can positively or negatively affect civic education in many ways beyond allocating time. Particular sources of principals' influence are control of resources and funding and control over personnel policies. Moreover, as school leaders, they set the tone for what is important at a school. Principals were rated relatively low by teachers responding to the written surveys, but this rating might be attributed more to perceptions about the helpfulness of school administrators to social studies teachers because of a relative lack of concern for civic education in their schools, rather than an evaluation of school administrators' influence over civic education practices in schools.

In Indiana, teachers suggested that some administrators might even place the importance of the social sciences below the importance of athletics. For example, one teacher only half-jokingly referred to a policy of reserving social studies positions for coaches when he told a younger female teacher, "If they had needed a football or basketball coach, you would not be here right now."[11] Another teacher in the same district was particularly harsh in what he sees as the perceived importance of the social sciences when he said, "Social studies is a stepchild in many ways, due to a lack of testing and the staffing related to being a coach."[12]

Of course, school administrative structures can affect the teaching of civics in positive ways as well. Project researchers encountered one very encouraging example, namely, that of a school administration valuing education in Sam Houston Elementary School in McAllen. The entire Sam Houston School is organized as a microcommunity with its own constitution, city government, community mail service, community store, community newspaper, and community bank. Almost all services at the school are managed and run by students. Further, students are rewarded for their work and good behavior with "cougar bucks," the school's currency, and are fined for poor behavior. Although many schools have many of the above activities, Sam Houston Elementary School has managed to combine these activities into a concept that is bigger than any single activity or project encountered at other schools. Without very active support and participation by the school administration, however, a project such as this would never be possible.[13]

In addition, table 11.2 shows that teachers see school social studies coordinators as a particularly helpful source in answering questions or addressing concerns about state and district expectations concerning civic education curricula and course work. Often, such a position is held by a peer among the school's teachers, so the individual holding this position has most likely gained a degree of respect independent of the title. Teachers feel more comfortable going to these individuals with their problems, because they assume that the social studies coordinators will listen and respond sympathetically. Nevertheless, people in these positions rarely, if ever, have any significant control over decisions relating to the allocation of funding and other resources. While they may be a useful advocate and guide for teachers, the range and power of their influence are somewhat limited.

Influence of Community and Professional Organizations

Community and professional organizations appear to have positive potential for promoting civic education. The most positive involvement of these organizations is their support of extracurricular programs, activities, and services that, otherwise, likely would not be provided by the education bureaucracies. Organizations mentioned frequently to project researchers included law-related education services provided by state bar associations, young lawyers associations, and local chapters of the League of Women Voters, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Rotary Clubs, and Kiwanis Clubs.[14] (Table 10.3 lists the organizations mentioned by teachers on the written surveys.)

These organizations provide education services of many types throughout the country. Law-related education, for example, was cited by teachers in Florida, Indiana, Ohio, and Texas as a source of professional development courses in civic education. The League of Women Voters was often mentioned as a source of support for mock elections held in schools. Similarly, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs supported scholarships for civic participation and supported service clubs within schools.[15]

Community organizations have the potential to substantially influence education practices in the states. Unfortunately, it appears that in some states organizations interested in other segments of the social studies have been more effective than their civic education counterparts. The social studies education consultant for the Michigan State Board of Education explained this point: "I don't see an effective advocacy group selling this [civics content]. History sells itself, as it has always been part of the curriculum. Geography has the National Geographic Society, and economics is promoted by the business community."[16] A curriculum coordinator with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction echoed this conclusion, saying, "Until there's more money behind this [civic education] like in other subjects, we can only do what finances allow. It's not a lesser priority, but there's not the money. National Geographic came along wanting to push geography standards along. We got them to chip in for all social studies standards. Unfortunately, nobody is doing the same for these other subjects. Of course they ask, but we ask them, 'Can you help fund it?' and they say, 'No.'"[17] All too often, it seems, community organizations with the potential to have a comprehensive, rather than a localized, influence on civic education practices are notable only by their absence.

Influence of Teachers

Teachers are the primary delivery agent for almost any education content or initiative. Although this report has discussed many ways that elected officials, district and school administrators, and community groups can influence classroom practices, education remains largely a joint endeavor between groups of students in classrooms with a single teacher for six hours a day. In such situations, teachers' personalities, skills, knowledge, and interests are strong factors, which few outside policies or structures have the ability to significantly affect if the teachers do not agree with them. Thus, any plan to improve civic education in the United States needs to focus on motivating teachers to be involved and equipping teachers with the necessary tools to implement it. Ultimately, a program's success or failure depends on teachers' willingness and abilities to make it succeed. Even students recognize the influence teachers have. As a Tallahassee high school student told researchers, "It's teachers that put time in it [civic education] that makes it successful."[18] Another Tallahassee student added, "I think you really need somebody excited about what they're doing for a class like civics. It is so complicated and there's so much stuff, we need someone who's excited."[19]

Fortunately, there are countless teachers who are deeply interested in encouraging their students to become better citizens. Even teachers who do not specifically teach civics are interested in good citizenship or, at least, good behavior. As a district social studies coordinator in Indiana stated, "I don't ever recall a teacher ever telling a student to be dishonest. I don't ever recall a teacher ever telling a kid to break the law. I mean we stress citizenship education by who we are and what we do, in everything we do."[20] Similarly, a high school teacher in Miami-Dade County explained, "My overall goals for my students are for them to be functioning citizens, culturally literate, and critical thinkers."[21]

Nevertheless, numerous measures of the levels of students' civic knowledge, skills, participation, and dispositions indicate that civics is not being adequately taught in schools. At least part of the explanation for poor performance lies in inadequate preservice teacher training. (Chapter 9 discusses at greater length preservice and in-service teacher professional development in civic education.) Problems in this area can make their presence felt early in a student's career. As one high school social studies teacher in Florida noted, "Elementary teachers emphasize the subject they have the best background in. If they don't have a good background in social studies, they may not teach it very much."[22] Unfortunately, as the social studies education consultant for the Michigan State Board of Education mentioned, "At the elementary level, it is very unusual to find someone with a background in political science. These simply aren't the type of people drawn to this profession.... How, then, are the children supposed to learn this information when their teachers don't know it?"[23]

The need for teacher professional development extends beyond an understanding and knowledge of the civics materials. Even if teachers know the materials and are enthusiastic about them, it does not follow that they know how to convey the information to students. Further, even if they can successfully convey civic knowledge, they also need to know how to effectively encourage civic participation and engender civic dispositions. These talents do not necessarily come naturally, so empowering teachers with the ability to foster these components of civic education in all students requires much more than a degree in political science and a few courses on classroom management and assessment. Unfortunately, preservice teacher training programs in universities often seem to neglect teaching primary and secondary teachers how to teach effectively all components of civic education (i.e., knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and dispositions) to students. The social studies education consultant for the Michigan State Board of Education provides insight with her comments:

“Practically every elementary social studies text is permeated with this [civics] material, but too many elementary teachers … don’t pull it all together to teach the kids the real lessons, even though the kids have a high sense of these concepts. What teacher doesn’t hear students say, ‘That isn’t fair,’ on a daily basis?… If you don’t teach the reasons behind the rules, it is too easy to miss the lesson.”[24] In responses to written surveys and discussions with project researchers, many teachers lamented that there are few opportunities for teachers to participate in continuing professional development in civic education.[25]

Thankfully, there are many examples of teachers who teach these subjects well, because they have an interest and knowledge of the subject; a willingness and ability to depart from the textbook, the prescribed curriculum, and the classroom; and the trust and at least tacit support of the administrative structures in their schools and districts. Often these teachers do these activities with little or no financial support. A teacher in Lincoln, commenting on the stipend she received to be a club sponsor, told researchers, “You can about buy a pair of shoes with it.” [26] Other teachers agree that extra activities happen only when there are dedicated teachers willing to give up their time. In their view, if no one is willing, the activities simply will not happen.[27]

Project researchers asked secondary social studies teachers to rank the top three sources of civic education lessons in an effort to discern where the teachers gain the greatest inspiration and ideas for classroom activities. Table 11.3 shows the most frequently cited and highest rated responses. For each state, a rank of “1” in a column indicates that this actor is the main source for civics lessons reported by the teacher respondents in this state, and a rank of “7” in a column indicates that this actor is the least important source for civics lessons for teachers in this state.

Teachers also were asked in the written survey to rate the relative importance of different actors in determining the amount of class time devoted to civics at their schools. Possible responses were the state departments of education, state legislatures, school districts, school social studies coordinators, school principals, and individual teachers. Table 11.4 shows the relative levels of importance teachers assigned to these six actors. For each state, a rank of “1” in a column indicates that teacher respondents in that state suggested that this actor has the greatest influence on allocations of class time, while a rank of “6” in a column means that teachers see this actor as the least relevant.

In their survey responses, teachers took a great deal of responsibility for what happens in their own classrooms. As tables 11.3 and 11.4 show, teachers believe they are the main source of civics lessons for their classes and that they are the most important influence on how much class time is devoted to civics topics. In fact, not only do they rate themselves as the primary source for lessons, but they also rank other teachers as the third most important source. Similarly, they rate themselves as the most important actors in determining civic education curricula (see table 11.1). With teachers perceiving themselves to hold this much influence over daily school activities, any attempt to improve civic education must have a significant focus on influencing teachers to make quality civic education a priority and equipping them to teach the materials effectively.

Table 11.3
Influence of Seven Actors as Sources of Civics Lessons Reported by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

State	Myself	Other Teachers	District Social Studies Chair/Coordinator	Certification Training	Teacher Workshops	Community Organizations	Textbooks
California	1	2	n/a	n/a	5	4	3
Florida	1	7	5	6	3	4	2
Indiana	1	3	4	5	6	7	2
Nebraska	1	3	4	7	5	6	2
New York	1	3	6	4	7	5	2
Ohio	1	6	5	3	4	7	2
Texas	1	3	5	6	4	7	2
All Teachers	1	3	5	7	4	6	2

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: For each state, a rank of "1" indicates most important source for civics lessons and classroom activities; a rank of "7" indicates least important source. The notation "n/a" indicates that no teacher responded in that category.

Table 11.4
Influence of Six Actors on Devotion of Class Time to Civics Topics Reported by Secondary Social Studies Teachers

State	Classroom Teachers	School Social Studies Coordinators	School Principals	School Districts	State Departments of Education	State Legislatures
California	1	3	4	2	5	6
Florida	2	4	5	1	3	6
Indiana	1	3	4	2	6	5
Nebraska	2	4	6	1	3	5
New York	1	2	5	4	3	6
Ohio	1	2	4	3	5	6
Texas	1	2	5	3	4	6
All Teachers	1	3	6	2	4	5

Source: LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.
Note: For each state, a rank of "1" indicates greatest perceived influence on allocations of class time; a rank of "6" indicates least perceived influence. The notation "n/a" indicates that no teacher responded in that category.

Influence of Students

As the ultimate recipients of civic education, students are another important factor to consider in the education equation. In site visits, project researchers talked with many students who had very insightful perspectives to offer about civic education in their districts and schools. In fact, especially in schools that have strong civic participation activities, students are surprisingly enthusiastic about the subject: "We're the future," said one student in New York, "so we should know what's going on."[28]

Disturbingly, it appears that substantially fewer nonhonors students are engaged in hands-on civic activities than are honors students. As one Florida student told researchers, "The majority of the people in civics-related activities are in honors and AP classes."[29] Although this may be understandable, researchers also observed that many of the most interesting civic activities in schools are developed by honors and advanced placement teachers almost solely for the students in these classes. It seems ironic that the students most able to learn from a more traditional lecture, reading, and homework format are the students given the most participatory activities, while the students who often have more difficulty with traditional classroom activities are not given more opportunity to learn through more interactive and engaging methods. (Chapter 10 contains a fuller discussion about the importance of participatory activities in civic education.) As a social studies teacher in Lincoln commented, "Teachers fail in that they don't modify the curriculum to suit their students."[30]

The students encountered during visits to schools suggested that students generally are willing and useful allies in efforts to expand civic education. Students often perceive civics to be a subject of high interest, compared to courses such as history and mathematics, because civics deals with issues that seem more relevant to their lives. For example, a Miami high school student commented, "Kids' rights get violated all the time. Learning about our rights in class has helped us know about our rights, and we tell our friends in the neighborhood about their rights if they don't know."[31] Civics, if used well, is often the method through which courses such as history and geography become relevant to students' lives.

Unfortunately, students' voices are not always heard, even by those who view students' educational experiences with great interest. An Indiana educator who also serves as a CCE congressional district coordinator gave a telling example of this to researchers: "One of the sixth graders at Gavitt Middle School made a comment last year to his teacher—'nobody has ever listened to what I think and listened to what I thought'—and that was so powerful."[32] If the lessons of civic participation mean anything, it is that students need not be relegated to mere observers of their own education.

Influence of Funding

Lack of funding for civics at various levels of the education hierarchy was an almost ubiquitous topic of discussions during project researchers' on-site visitations. Funding provides insight into state, district, and school priorities. As civic education and social sciences are not high priorities, they often receive substantially less funding than subjects such as math, science, and reading. Funding deficiencies hinder the creation of and teacher access to civic education professional development opportunities, the implementation of extracurricular and co-curricular civic education activities, and the development and acquisition of high-quality curricula and instructional materials.

State Policies

State funding is seldom earmarked for specific educational instruction at the school level. This money is more often funneled through several levels of the education bureaucracy before reaching the instructional budgets of teachers. State funds do directly affect civic education in a few areas, though. In major textbook-adoption states, state funds are used as a mechanism to encourage teachers and schools to use the texts adopted by the state, as state funds generally cannot be used to purchase texts not approved by the state. State funds are also often used for the creation and support of professional education programs. In this regard, states could be encouraged to help finance and pilot teacher in-service training in civic education. In reality, though, few look to state funding as an issue when speaking of civic education. As a Miami-Dade County teacher told researchers, "To improve civic education, you need more programs from the district and, especially, more money from the state. But the state probably won't give the money, so the district will have to do it."[33] However, another Miami-Dade County teacher was probably more realistic when she commented that "it's more a school issue. It depends on the priorities of the school."[34]

District Policies

Just as states have varying degrees of state versus local control over education policies, districts also differ in the relative amount of authority held between central administrations and individual school administrations. District administrators in districts with strong site-based management policies have relatively less power to affect school practices because of a lack of influence via funding. Districts with more decentralized management philosophies, once again, act in ways comparable to those of similarly decentralized states. Their funding influence is often limited to creating and distributing curricula, advising school administrators and teachers, providing professional development opportunities, and supporting material and textbook selection.

A particular area where district funding can be beneficial to civic education is in its support of extracurricular activities. Having districts organize and support programs that encourage community service, mock elections, and other hands-on, participatory activities substantially benefits civic education in districts. Further, providing training for teachers to implement these programs is also of great value.

Teacher training and professional development are particular areas that could use more funding. Often, the professional development programs most useful to teachers are funded by outside sources. For instance, several teachers remarked on memorable training experiences sponsored by law-related education offices in state bar associations, and they often wished they could get more assistance from the district to make more use of these activities.[35]

A group of elementary school teachers in Lincoln suggested that they would like increased funds for teacher pay, staff development, and new technology (e.g., computers). They would also like funds with which they can provide transportation for more students, so that they can participate in a greater range of hands-on civics activities. In fact, when asked what the district can do to make teaching civics easier and more effective, teachers' unanimous answer was additional funding.[36]

Groups that can be beneficial in encouraging more district funding of civic education programs include state bar associations, particularly their law-related education offices; young lawyers associations; school board officials; local VFW posts; other service organizations; and local Parent/Teacher Associations.

School Policies

Although funding for social studies may be less than that for other subject areas at the state and local levels, it is at the school level where priorities can result in some of the most unequal allocation of funding resources. A teacher in Miami-Dade County agreed with this assessment, saying, "The budget for social studies is dependent on the school's commitment to social studies."[37] Teachers in McAllen almost all suggested that funding for the social sciences is less than that for other subject areas. As a high school teacher commented, "The other programs are much more supported—with math labs, English labs. We get the smallest piece of the pie. Even as our number of social studies teachers increases, the budget [for social studies] decreases."[38] Another McAllen teacher concurred, saying, "Other subjects have their own wings with offices and resource rooms. We're spread out all over the building."[39]

Although school administrations often fail to include social studies as a funding priority, teachers in many of the 13 districts visited by project researchers have done substantial work to find funding from community organizations, not-for-profit education organizations, local businesses, and federal agencies. Some teachers see this in a more negative light, because fund-raising is time consuming and a skill not everyone possesses. One teacher in Raymond suggested that fund-raising could actually be seen as an opportunity to demonstrate the spirit of civic participation. She specifically commented, "I just don't think money is a problem—you can find it in the local community."[40]

A further concern regarding school-level funding is the inequity among schools in the same district. For instance, the social studies consultant for Lincoln Public Schools suggested that, when it comes to funding of social studies in the district's many schools, "It's either feast or famine."[41] Groups at individual Lincoln schools raise money for extras, and some schools simply do a better job than others do. There also are inequities in physical resources provided, especially in terms of the availability of technology. The end result is that schools with greater financial resources at their disposal can afford even more advantages and extra programs, whereas poor schools cannot afford them and often do not have the parental and community support to raise money. "De facto inequity happens," according to one Nebraska educator.[42] According to her, although the Lincoln district tries to equalize resources as much as it can by providing better staff ratios and all-day kindergarten in poorer schools, there is only so much it can do.[43]

Summary Analysis of Factors Influencing Civic Education at the District Level

Chapters 6 through 10 examine the many policies that can influence the quality of civic education in the classroom and district. These chapters discuss how civics classroom practices are affected by state and district policies and practices in the setting of content standards with respect to civics topics, the selection of instructional and supplementary materials, the use of standardized assessment, the requirement and support of preservice and in-service professional development, and the organization and funding of extracurricular and co-curricular activities for students. They also recommend certain reforms in policies related to these areas and in the implementation of these policies.

This chapter, in turn, makes clear that policies are neither created nor implemented in a vacuum. Different organizations and individuals play differing roles in the policy arena. For instance, state departments of education in the United States stand, for the most part, at the top of the education administrative hierarchy. Their actions have widespread influence, and their decisions affect relatively large numbers of students. Compare this to the dedicated school social studies coordinator, who sits much nearer the teachers in the organizational flowchart of the state's education system. This person's decisions affect a relative handful of teachers and students, yet still the individual in this position often can be more confident than a colleague at the state level that his or her office's policies and actions really are having an impact on the education that students under his or her control actually receive. Of course, this analysis is not surprising to individuals familiar with the field of education or with any large organizational structure. Nevertheless, it is a point that warrants emphasis.

As chapters 6 through 10 make clear, the areas over which state administrative structures have influence are numerous. Yet, despite all the powerful impacts discussed in these chapters, classroom teachers, when asked, assign relatively little importance to state departments of education in their ability to influence the curriculum actually taught in the classroom, as table 11.1 shows. Moreover, table 11.2 reveals that teachers give very little credit to state departments of education for being useful sources of assistance whenever they have questions about state standards and curricula. These impressions by teachers suggest that state departments of education currently do a relatively poor job of communicating with the district and school levels of the state education hierarchy. Teachers seem to view state education departments almost as some sort of mysterious, impenetrable force.

On the other hand, the findings presented in this chapter and the several chapters preceding it suggest that state departments of education have more influence than teachers might attribute to them. For instance, table 11.3 shows that teachers rate themselves as their most valuable source of lessons in civics, while other teacher colleagues are the third most important inspiration. As chapter 9 discusses, however, teachers' training and professional development are noticeably influenced by state-level decisions. Thus, part of what teachers attribute to themselves can in fact be traced back to state policies concerning certification and licensure renewal. Moreover, as table 11.3 shows, teachers also view textbooks as a very influential source for civics lessons. Again, however, as chapter 7 discusses, states can wield great power over the selection of instructional materials. Thus, state departments of education, despite the limitations presented here, often hold a dominant position with respect to education policymaking.

Still, state education departments often choose to surrender much of this control to district and school administrations. In such cases, these intermediate levels in the state education hierarchy take on greater importance because of the increased influence they have in policy arenas, such as curriculum development, instructional materials, assessment, professional development (mostly in-service), and extracurricular programs. It is important to note, however, that fewer and fewer states are willing to let the progress of educational goals go unassessed, as indicated by tables 2.7 and 8.4 and the discussion here. Moreover, decisions regarding teacher certification requirements are reserved for state policymakers. Nevertheless, the impact of priorities at the district and school level can be felt to varying degrees within the classroom. As this chapter has pointed out, however, all too often in the field of civic education, that impact appears to be a negative one.

At the district level, community organizations can often build on and cooperate in the positive steps taken by districts and schools to enhance the teaching of civics topics. If the combined impact of state, district, and school priorities regarding civic education is a negative or negligent one, local civic organizations can mollify the damage, while struggling to shift the priorities of education policymakers to include the building of a better informed and more effective citizenry. Indeed, in countless localities across the country, civic organizations are fulfilling these twin roles. However, the comments of state officials related in this chapter suggest that community organizations frequently are notable in state-level civic education matters only by their absence.

Few could argue with the assertion that the individual teacher of any subject makes the ultimate difference whether a particular student enjoys a rewarding and successful educational experience. Civic education is no exception. Probably the most rewarding part of project researchers' visits to school districts in seven states was seeing just how many teachers really can and do make a difference in the lives of their students. Spending too much time, however, on trying to realign the educational priorities of teachers to focus more on matters of participation and citizenship will probably not be efficient.

Teachers, as this and previous chapters have shown, are buffeted on all sides by forces that are mostly beyond their control. Teachers are rational actors, so they should be expected to react to the priorities and policies that surround them. When states, districts, and schools send clear messages to teachers through policies regarding curricula, instructional materials, assessments, professional development, and extracurricular activities that fostering informed and effective citizenship is not a valued goal or a high priority, teachers naturally will respond accordingly. Highlighting inadequacies in state policies and district practices does not absolve teachers of responsibility nor does it mean that they should not be held accountable; rather, it keeps attention focused on areas in which reformers can truly effect change. Trying to improve the teaching of civics topics by focusing on teachers alone is a Sisyphean task doomed to failure.

Discussion of the influence of funding follows a similar path. No educator, in any subject or field, will ever be heard complaining that he or she has too much money. Nevertheless, adequate levels of funding for areas such as challenging and relevant instructional materials, appropriate assessment tools, quality professional development, and engaging and enriching extracurricular and co-curricular activities seem particularly absent in the field of civic education. States can proclaim their commitment to informed and effective citizens in the constitutions they write, in the laws they pass, and in the educational standards they publish and mandate. Still, the most concrete and telling statement of priority available to states, districts, and schools is the provision of appropriate funding. If states, districts, and schools truly believe that strengthening the quality of citizenship among students is a worthwhile goal, then they must be willing to adequately fund the various efforts necessary to reach that goal.

Conclusions

Different organizations and individuals possess varied strengths and weaknesses in improving the quality of classroom civic education. State departments of education, through their policies (especially assessment), can widely influence practices in a variety of civics-related areas, but they seem less able to communicate why particular policy goals are worthwhile and should be embraced. For example, teachers who responded to the project survey reported that only state legislatures and school principals have less influence than state departments of education over classroom decisions concerning curriculum and class time.

District and school administrative bodies can more directly affect teachers' priorities and actions than state-level organizations, but the reach of these administrative bodies often is limited by state-level requirements and inadequate resources. Though teachers assign low importance to state-level institutions, state policy is filtered through district practices before reaching teachers. Consequently, some of the influence that teachers credit to district- and school-level organizations and individuals likely is the result of state-level requirements.

Meanwhile, interested community organizations possess notable potential to enhance and reinforce beneficial state, district, and school practices. However, it appears that the scope of their vision is sometimes limited, and much of this potential remains untapped. Teachers, as has been and always will be the case, have the power to transform lives year after year, but they also must react to the vast array of forces that surround them. Finally, one hopes that all these organizations and individuals can come together to unleash the power of students' potential by giving them the opportunities to participate in the civic education decisions that affect them the most.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest ways in which state, district, and school organizations and individuals can improve their influence on the teaching of civics topics.

1. *State departments of education should evaluate the effectiveness of their systems for disseminating information to districts, schools, and teachers and then correct inefficiencies in these systems.* If ideas are to be effectively shared, each level of the education hierarchy must strive to communicate better with the other levels. Without strong communication networks, the best intentions are not helpful and, indeed, might be harmful in that they engender cynicism about future ideas and reforms.

2. *CCE and its state coordinators, in collaboration with state, district, and school administrators, should strive to have greater numbers of district and school administrators understand the importance of civic education and expand their attention to civics content in curricula and courses.* As the chief executives of schools and school districts, these administrators are responsible for setting school priorities. Even if they do not make the final hiring and funding decisions in their districts, it is likely that civic education will receive appropriate resources in districts with strong civic education advocates among superintendents and top administrators. Informing district and school administrators about the values and benefits that civics brings to schools and communities in terms of decreasing violence, increasing voluntarism, and increasing critical thinking skills among students can all produce converts among district and school administrators, even in states where the social sciences are not centrally tested. Without administrative support, however, civics and social studies will continue to be marginalized by school administration policies that allocate less funding for civics content, provide less effective teachers for civics topics, impede civics-related extracurricular activities, and limit the time allocated to teach civics content.

3. *CCE and its state and congressional district coordinators should work with district social studies coordinators to increase grassroots support for stronger and more effective civic education policies and practices.* In many of the states visited by project researchers, teachers heralded their district social studies coordinators as exceptionally effective civic education advocates. These coordinators are natural collaborators with CCE in establishing grassroots networks. They regularly correspond with social studies and elementary teachers, coordinate and oversee continuing professional development, assist in selecting textbooks, and assist in developing and promoting extracurricular and co-curricular civic education activities. In rural areas that have large numbers of small school districts with no district social studies coordinators, these districts should work together to establish networks of teachers that mirror the roles of the coordinators. CCE's network of state and congressional district coordinators, as well as electronic networks, could enhance the effectiveness of the coordinator and teacher networks in informing citizens about the importance of and the need for stronger and more effective civic education in grades K-12.

4. *CCE, in collaboration with its state and congressional district coordinators, state policymakers, and district social studies coordinators, should explore opportunities for national and local partnerships to increase public funding and support for civic education, to expand the inclusion of civics content in state assessments, and to improve civic education professional development.* At the national level, CCE and its partners should explore increased collaboration with law-related education associations and other nationwide civic education organizations to seek greater public awareness of and support for civic education through a national campaign or similar initiative. At the local level, partnerships with lawyers groups, chapters of such national organizations as the League of Women Voters and Kiwanis Clubs, and similar groups could emphasize the grassroots outreach and community involvement activities necessary to complement the national-level initiatives.

5. *CCE, in collaboration with its state and district coordinators, state and national policymakers, and education policy researchers, should develop a program of short-term and long-term policy analyses to examine relationships between effective civic education and students' positive and negative civic behaviors.* There is a dearth of policy analyses that explore relationships between students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions and their civic behavior in schools and communities. CCE should take the lead, working with appropriate educators, policymakers, and community leaders, to develop a research agenda to address these and related questions. Analyses of relationships between civic education and civic behavior could support increased funding for civic education initiatives for students at all grade, income, and ability levels, as well as improve the effectiveness of civic education curricula, extracurricular activities, assessment, and professional development in improving students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Notes

[1] Robert C. Johnston and Jessica L. Sandham, *Education Week on the Web*, "States Increasingly Flexing their Policy Muscle" (April 14, 1999). Online. Available: http://www.edweek.org/ew/vol-18/31contro.h18. Accessed: April 19, 1999.

[2] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Russell H. Landry, Executive Director, S.C.A.L.E.S. Project, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 25, 1999.

[3] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Central Middle School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[4] Telephone interview by Jeffrey Goveia with Kurt Eriksmoen, Curriculum Coordinator, Division of Independent Study, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Bismarck, North Dakota, February 17, 1999.

[5] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Karen Stanley, Social Studies Consultant, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[6] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[7] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Teachers, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[8] Interviews by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with High School Social Studies Teachers, Albany High School, Albany City School District, Albany, New York, February 8, 1999.

[9] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Teachers, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[10] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[11] Interviews by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with High School Social Studies Teachers, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, Evansville, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with Elementary School Teachers, Sam Houston Elementary School, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[14] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Telephone interview by Jeffrey Goveia with Karen Todorov, Social Studies Education Consultant, Michigan State Board of Education, Lansing, Michigan, February 16, 1999.

[17] Eriksmoen interview.

[18] Interviews by Greg Litt with High School Students, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Interview by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Rick Borries, District Social Studies Coordinator, Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, Evansville, Indiana, January 19, 1999.

[21] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with High School Social Studies Teachers, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida, February 23, 1999.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Todorov interview.

[24] Ibid.

[25] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[26] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Interviews by Pete Weber and Anthony Wier with High School Students, Niskayuna High School, Niskayuna Central School District, Niskayuna, New York, February 9, 1999.

[29] Interviews by Greg Litt with High School Students, Leon High School, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[30] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Ted Larson, Social Studies Teacher, Lincoln Southeast High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 11, 1999.

[31] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with High School Social Studies Students, Academy of Legal and Public Affairs, Coral Reef Senior High School, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida, February 23, 1999.

[32] Interview by Ben Crawford and Karen Eikner with Cathy Bomberger, Center for Civic Education Congressional District Coordinator, School Town of Munster, Munster, Indiana, January 22, 1999.

[33] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Mays Middle School, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Goulds, Florida, February 24, 1999.

[34] Ibid.

[35] LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999.

[36] Interviews by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Elementary School Teachers, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Nebraska, February 10, 1999.

[37] Interviews by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Middle School Social Studies Teachers, Mays Middle School, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Goulds, Florida, February 24, 1999.

[38] Interviews by Jeffrey Goveia and Shannon Lamm with High School Teachers, McAllen Independent School District, McAllen, Texas, February 24, 1999.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Interview by Greg Pulliam and Elizabeth Witt with Kim Blazek, Business/Economics Teacher, Raymond Central Secondary School, Raymond Public Schools, Raymond, Nebraska, February 12, 1999.

[41] Stanley interview.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

Chapter 12. A Renewed Commitment to Civic Education for the 21st Century

Education has a civic mission "to prepare informed, rational, humane, and participating citizens committed to the values and principles of American constitutional democracy."[1] Public education systems, especially kindergarten through grade 12, must provide students with the civic knowledge, civic intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions (i.e., traits of private and public character) that enhance their abilities and their willingness to become responsible, informed, and effective citizens committed to the preservation and improvement of this democracy. While families, the media, religious institutions, community groups, and other institutions of democratic society influence the development of students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions, schools have a special and historic responsibility through both curricular and co-curricular activities to promote and develop civic literacy and competency.

It is rare to find a state policymaker, school district administrator, or classroom teacher who does not acknowledge the importance of civic education in creating an informed and effective citizenry. Legislators and educators of all political persuasions endorse the importance of the schools' roles in enhancing students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Indeed, more than one-fourth of all state constitutions mandate a system of public schools for the explicit purpose of creating an educated and engaged citizenry capable of managing and preserving a free and democratic form of government.

However, state education policies and school district practices often fail to affirm the importance of civic education directly and continuously throughout grades K-12. These policies and practices often take the civic education of American youth for granted, assuming that civic education will occur indirectly in the study of other disciplines, as a general outcome of the process of schooling, and in other organizations of society. While there is widespread talk about the importance of equipping students with the tools to become effective workers in the global marketplace, many states and school districts have neglected to ensure that students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to participate as effective citizens in their local, state, and national communities. At a time when more and more Americans are becoming concerned about what they perceive as a fraying of the civic fabric, many states and school districts are failing to make education in matters of civic life an explicit, valued priority.

This negligence is having important and far-reaching consequences. As reported in late 1998 by the National Association of Secretaries of State, "Young people today lack interest, trust and knowledge about American politics, politicians and public life generally."[2] In 1996, less than one-half of the 18- to 24-year-old population even registered to vote, and less than half of these registered young people voted in 1998.[3] Although young Americans have a good understanding of their rights as citizens, they have only a vague understanding of their responsibilities as citizens. "Being an American who cares about the good of the country" is an abstract concept for youth, who often have no understanding of the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be an effective and responsible citizen. Students' "personalized and often vague understanding of citizenship deters them from getting involved in the political process."[4]

Moreover, "students have only a superficial knowledge of civics and lack depth of understanding. For example, [the 1988 Civics National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) results show that] only 38 percent of 8th graders knew that Congress makes laws; and nearly half of high school seniors did not recognize typical examples of the federal system of checks and balances."[5] Students also lack higher-order civic intellectual skills in applying civic knowledge and in connecting civics facts and concepts.[6]

Nevertheless, in a few states and school districts, various policies and district practices are serving to enhance students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. State constitutional provisions, statutes, standards, and related rules and regulations form the foundation for effective district and school civics curricula and course content. Diverse policies in other areas, such as assessments, instructional materials, and certification requirements, then build on this foundation. Teachers, with the support of their districts and schools, are promoting civic education successfully in their classrooms and communities within the context of these state policies. Indeed, when state policies, district practices, and classroom teaching combine to create a positive civic education experience, project researchers witnessed on several occasions how this experience greatly increases student interest in and commitment to civic engagement. Students are ready and eager to learn to become informed and engaged citizens; effective state policies and district practices help students achieve this goal.

Unfortunately, most states have not fully developed and implemented a comprehensive and coherent set of state civics policies with all the desired characteristics. What is needed in each state are explicit, comprehensive, and complementary state civic education policies that provide the foundation for effective civic education for all students throughout the K-12 grades; that are communicated to and understood by district and school administrators and teachers, as well as by the general public; that foster greater attention to civic education practices, curricula, and course content at the district and school level; and that effectively involve enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers.

Foundation for the Future

Vision

Sustained, systematic attention to civic education in grades K-12 must be a national priority if the United States is to reverse the patterns of civic illiteracy and non-participation that American students and young adults exhibit. Moreover, primary responsibility for addressing this priority must be shared between the states and their local school districts. All students should receive an education that enables them to participate as informed and effective citizens throughout their lives, and state policymakers, school administrators, teachers, and communities should together take the necessary steps to achieve this goal.

The Center for Civic Education (CCE) has articulated well the principles that should guide the development and implementation of state civics standards and related policies in every state, as well as the civic education practices of school districts, schools, and teachers:

1. "Education in civics and government should not be incidental to the schooling of American youth but a central purpose of education essential to the well-being of American democracy."[7]

2. "Civics and government is a subject equal in importance to other subjects. Civics and government, like history and geography, is an integrative and interdisciplinary subject."[8]

3. "Civics and government should be taught explicitly and systematically from kindergarten through twelfth grade whether as separate units and courses or as a part of courses in other subjects."[9]

4. "Effective instruction in civics and government requires attention to the content of the discipline as well as to the essential skills, principles, and values required for full participation in and reasoned commitment to our democratic system."[10]

Citizenship and the teaching of democracy are so central for the life of the nation and the schools that each state's set of civics policies should include requirements (e.g., constitutional provisions, state statutes, administratively promulgated standards, teaching certification, and assessment guidelines) that ensure that civic education is a part of every student's learning experiences. The general public must understand the rationale for these civics requirements, as must district administrators and teachers.

Preparation of American youth for effective and responsible citizenship is a long-term commitment. Such citizenship is not achieved when students complete one or two courses but, rather, by the schools' repeated attention throughout grades K-12 to the full range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that constitute civic education.

Recommendations

The following recommendations support the development of sound, sustainable, and long-term commitments to civic education in grades K-12 in all states and reinforce the actions recommended in chapters 3 through 11.

Civic Education as a National Priority

The Center for Civic Education has a record of effective leadership in articulating an understanding of citizenship that incorporates civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions; in achieving consensus on national standards in civics and government; and in shaping K-12 civic education curricula and instructional materials that are used throughout the United States and internationally. Thus, CCE should take the lead, working with national organizations having civic education responsibilities (e.g., national associations of state legislators, school boards, and school administrators), in articulating and implementing a national initiative to affirm the civic mission of the schools and to promote sustained and systematic attention to civic education in grades K-12.

A national initiative must make a compelling case for civic education as an essential and distinct part of every student's educational experience at all grade levels from kindergarten through grade 12. In no way does a national initiative imply the development or the desirability of uniform state and district responses with respect to civic education; states and their local school districts should, and will, continue to have the primary responsibility for implementing civic education policies and practices appropriate to their political, social, and educational goals and priorities. Yet, a national initiative that affirms the basic ideas of a common citizenship with democratic values that transcends state and district borders can be invaluable in providing the visibility and attention likely to stimulate more effective state and district policies and practices. Participation by national associations having significant state- and district-level involvement in the development and implementation of these policies and practices is particularly important in this national initiative.

Civic Education as a State Priority

Since K-12 education policies are primarily established at the state level, it is essential that each state incorporate a strong and unambiguous commitment to civic education in its statutes and other state education policies. This commitment should address the four CCE-articulated principles listed above (e.g., civics and government should be taught explicitly and systematically from kindergarten through grade 12; civics and government is a subject equal in importance to other subjects); it should address not just students' civic knowledge but also their civic skills and civic dispositions (i.e., the traits of private and public character essential for citizens of a democracy); it should address, in a thorough and balanced manner, the civics content of the *National Standards for Civics and Government* framework; and it should result in coherent and mutually reinforcing state policies that encourage school districts, schools, and teachers to respond effectively to the challenge of educating all students for informed and effective citizenship.

Implementation of this recommendation will require the involvement of national organizations composed of state legislators and other officials, working with CCE and its state coordinators, not only in articulating such a commitment to civic education but also in reaffirming it, year after year, in state policies, appropriations, and related ways. Successful implementation requires that state departments of education and their senior officials, including state social studies supervisors, understand the implications of such a state commitment to civic education as a state priority; for example, civic education should have attention and resources comparable to those given mathematics, writing, and reading.

It is important that each state give a high priority to an articulation of its commitment to civic education. Such a commitment is not simply a decision regarding the state's educational system; it is a decision regarding the future of the state as a constitutional democracy within the American political, social, and economic system. Although the existence of state civics policies is not sufficient to ensure that all school districts within a state implement civic education practices that provide a quality civic education for all students, the presence of such policies is absolutely necessary.

Key State Civic Education Policies

One effective manifestation of a state's priority for civic education is its adoption and aggressive implementation of specific, accessible, required civics standards that address all components of civic education and the civics content in the *National Standards for Civics and Government* framework. Civics standards separate from standards for other social studies are more likely to receive the attention and respect they deserve from districts and teachers and thus to achieve the desired student results. Specifying civics content in explicit sections of state social studies standards also can be effective, although a key consideration here is the attention given to civics content in these standards relative to the content of other social studies subjects.

In specifying and implementing its civics policies, a state should give particular attention to the possibility of infusing civics content into the curriculum for each grade level from kindergarten through 12th grade. Table 12.1 provides one model for such K-12 infusion, namely, CCE's recommendations for specific civics-related courses and units of instruction requirements within the K-12 social studies curriculum framework. This table illustrates the feasibility of addressing civics content in each grade and could, in each state, serve as a starting point for discussions between state education policymakers and district officials regarding the systematic integration of civics content across all K-12 grade levels.

As part of its civics policies, a state also should strongly consider requiring students to take a capstone course in civics as a graduation requirement. However, it is critical that a capstone course not be seen as a substitute for coverage of civics content throughout grades K-12 but, rather, as a culminating opportunity to unify, integrate, and strengthen students' civic lessons learned throughout their schooling.

A key component of any meaningful statewide commitment to civics should be a state's teacher certification and professional development policies. Colleges of teacher education and the prospective teachers who attend them generally affirm that the effective communication of civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions should be one of the highest goals of any educator. Civics often is neglected, however, because little in state teacher certification requirements affirms that civics should be valued. As a result, each wave of new teachers often continues to assume that civics instruction will occur indirectly through instruction in other subjects. Even if state standards or other policies lead teachers to address civics topics, however, their preservice training may not equip them with the ability to instruct students effectively in these topics. Moreover, once teachers have entered the classroom, in-service professional development policies (e.g., recertification requirements) need to reaffirm that civic education is a high priority and to foster quality instruction of civics topics.

Table 12.1
Center for Civic Education's Proposed Civics Requirements for Kindergarten through Grade 12

Grade	Specific Treatment	Treatment in Other Subjects
K - 2	30 hours per school year at each grade, e.g., focus on rules, authority, justice, and responsibility	Primary and elementary—a minimum of 30 hours per school year, e.g., as part of instruction in reading, language arts, math, science, and physical education
3 - 4	40 hours per school year at each grade, e.g., community and state studies focusing on local and state governments	
5	40 hours per school year, e.g., integrated into a course in U.S. history/civics and/or government/geography	Teams of middle-grade teachers develop integrated curriculum units infusing content standards for civics and government, e.g., a language arts/literature unit focusing on the theme of power and authority; a science unit on environmental pollution focusing on the public policy aspects of the issue
6 - 7	Four two-week units at each grade (approx. 30 hours per school year), e.g., focus on comparative government as part of a world civilization/area studies program	
8	One semester course (approx. 60 hours), e.g., U.S. constitutional government	
9 - 10	Six two-week units at each grade (approx. 40 hours per school year), e.g., focus on comparative political philosophies and political systems in a world history/global studies course	Teachers planning high school courses in other subjects could use the content standards for civics and government to develop thematic organizers, e.g., a technology education class exploring how safety procedures and workplace rules protect everyone.
11	60 hours per school year as an integral part of specific social science course work, e.g., 20th-century U.S. history and government	
12	Full-year course (120 hours), e.g., applied civics/participation in government	

Source: Center for Civic Education, *Rationale and Proposed Requirements* (Calabasas, Calif., 1998), p. 3 of 5. Online. Available: http://www.civiced.org/campaign_proposal.html. Accessed: May 9, 1999.
Note: For grades K-4, 30 minutes per day was used as an average instructional period. For grades 5-12, 40 minutes per day was used as an average instructional period.

Assessment is one of the most effective means that a state has to affect school district practices. Valuing the information that assessment provides and the direct influence that assessment appears to have on district practices, more and more states are deciding to use statewide assessments in a number of subjects. A state truly committed to improving the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions of its citizenry must put the assessment of civics on an equal footing with that of other subjects. State policies must ensure that, whatever assessment system is used by the state, this system makes absolutely clear to all educators in the state that civic education is a high priority. States also should design an assessment for civic education that adequately addresses all the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to participate as an informed and effective citizen.

Finally, even when a state promulgates and implements the most comprehensive, systematic, and high-quality set of state civic education policies, these policies will not lead to effective district civic education curricula and course content unless state education policymakers ensure that the policies are clearly communicated to the general public, as well as to district administrators and teachers. Electronic communication, teacher education programs, and professional development programs are only a few of the means by which this communication could occur. Everyone involved in the education of American youth—legislators and government officials, community leaders, religious groups, school principals and counselors, teachers and teacher trainers—should clearly understand how each can work with the schools to ensure that students at all grade levels are educated for lifelong citizenship.

School District Accountability for Civic Education

Although a state can express its commitments to civic education through its state-level policies and communicate these policies to school districts, it is school districts that must put the policies into practice. States must give school districts incentives for effective civics teaching and learning, but school districts ultimately bear the greatest responsibility for their students' civic education. In many districts across the nation, a clear commitment by district leaders, school administrators, classroom teachers, community organizations, and parents to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential for informed and effective citizenship is leading to notable successes. By actively laying out their visions and goals for the civic education of their youth, local communities can build on the set of state policies.

Districts should seek not only to meet the requirements of state policies (e.g., by completely addressing state content standards or by performing well on state assessments) but also to implement district practices that complement and build on the state policies. For instance, districts should demonstrate their commitment to enhanced civic education by increasing the time and funding given to in-service teacher training initiatives that focus specifically on civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Professional development programs should communicate to teachers the state and district priorities in civic education and show teachers how to help students acquire the civic knowledge and skills, as well as exhibit the civic dispositions, critically important to the state and the local community.

Another area in which school districts can have an important impact on students' civic education is through the expanded use of extracurricular and co-curricular activities that reinforce the civics content addressed in the classroom. District administrators, through their role as community leaders and through their allocation of resources, can foster the design and use of programs that give students a real opportunity to prepare for lifelong citizenship through their participation in civic life. These programs give students a chance to become active in their community and help them learn how to continue to improve the political systems in which they live.

Extracurricular and co-curricular activities also serve as effective ways to involve greater numbers of local community organizations in the civic education of students. At the national level, networks and associations of community groups have an important role to play in focusing attention on the importance of civics instruction; at the local level, partnerships between school districts and community organizations amplify the impact each has in fulfilling its share of the civic mission of education. Many students will live their lives in the communities in which they learn. Thus, local school districts themselves ultimately have the most direct responsibility for ensuring that these communities are civil, healthy, vibrant, and dynamic.

A Renewed Commitment

In the early days of the Republic, few citizens doubted that the building of a strong, democratic, and free nation would be a lengthy and laborious task. However, many citizens have come to assume that, regardless of the level of their individual civic knowledge, skills, participation, and dispositions, American constitutional democracy will always exist. This assumption does not bode well for the future of our nation.

States and localities throughout the United States must reaffirm that the civic mission of schools is "to prepare informed, rational, humane, and participating citizens committed to the values and principles of American constitutional democracy."[11] A democratic nation requires a citizenry with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be informed and effective participants in their own governance. Thomas Jefferson clearly understood this when he wrote, "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion."[12] Alexis de Tocqueville, in his American travels a generation after Jefferson uttered these words, witnessed firsthand the influence of education: "It cannot be doubted that in the United States the instruction of the people powerfully contributes to the support of the democratic republic...."[13]

However, de Tocqueville also saw that knowledge was not enough, that it had to be strengthened with the alloys of participation and experience: "I am still further from thinking ... that men can be instantaneously made citizens by teaching them to read and write. True information is mainly derived from experience; and if the Americans had not been gradually accustomed to govern themselves, their book-learning would not help them much at the present day."[14] Educators and policymakers do not assume that young adults can learn a task like driving a car just by watching other people drive; instead, adults instruct students in the rules of the road and supervise them as they practice driving on their own. How much greater and more important a task is it to participate in the governing of one's own nation, state, and local community?

It is not enough for policymakers and educators to hope or to assume that students will acquire the civic knowledge and the civic intellectual and participatory skills, as well as exhibit the civic dispositions, they need to participate as citizens just by watching other people. As the nation crosses into the next century, the entire education system must renew its commitment to its civic mission, dedicating itself at every level to ensuring that students are transformed into informed and effective citizens. This is the challenge facing states and school districts as they develop, implement, and communicate their civic education policies and practices.

Notes

[1] Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, Calif., 1994), p. v.

[2] National Association of Secretaries of State, *New Millennium Project—Phase I* (Washington, D.C., 1999), p. 5. Online. Available: http://www.nass.org/nass99/youthvtr1.pdf. Accessed: March 28, 1999.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p.7.

[5] Margaret Stimmann Branson and Charles N. Quigley, *The Role of Civic Education* (Washington, D.C.: The Communitarian Network, September 1998), p. 24.

[6] Richard G. Niemi and Jane Junn, *Civic Education: What Makes Students Learn* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 24-25, 33.

[7] Center for Civic Education, *Rationale and Proposed Requirements* (Calabasas, Calif., 1998), p. 2 of 5. Online. Available: http://www.civiced.org/campaign_proposal.html. Accessed: May 9, 1999.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, Calif., 1994), p. v.

[12] Thomas Jefferson (1820), cited in Center for Civic Education, *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, Calif., 1994), p. v.

[13] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 2 vols. (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1990), vol. 1, p. 317.

[14] Ibid., pp. 317-18.

Appendix A. Center for Civic Education Programs and Publications

Programs and Publications	Descriptions and Goals
We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution	an instructional program on the history and principles of American constitutional democracy for elementary, middle, and high school students
We the People... Project Citizen	a civic education program designed to develop interest in public policymaking as well as the ability to participate competently and responsibly in state and local government
Foundations of Democracy Series	curricular materials for grades K-12 on basic concepts and principles of constitutional democracy: authority, privacy, responsibility, and justice
Exercises in Participation Series	curricular materials on prevention of substance abuse and violence designed to develop participatory skills for upper elementary and middle school grades
Youth for Justice	a national network of programs designed to promote civic competence and responsibility at all grade levels and in all states
CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education	a comprehensive model framework for civic education in elementary and secondary schools
National Standards for Civics and Government	standards for grades K-12 that identify what students should know and be able to do in civics and government when they complete grades 4, 8, and 12
Professional Development and Summer Institutes	intensive professional development programs for elementary, middle, and high school teachers in the United States and in selected international sites
National Campaign to Promote Civic Education	national campaign to affirm the civic mission of the schools and to influence states and school districts to devote sustained attention to civic education from kindergarten through 12th grade
CIVITAS: An International Civic Education Exchange Program	a cooperative project of a consortium of leading civic education organizations in the United States and other participating nations to exchange ideas and experiences leading toward the goal of developing civic competence and responsibility among youth in emerging and established democracies
Center Website <www.civiced.org>	a site to provide support and assistance to teachers, students, and members of the center's network through online curricular materials, event and institute calendars, e-mail directories, and links to various government and research sites

Source: Center for Civic Education, "History, Mission, and Programs of the Center for Civic Education" (Calabasas, California, May 1999), n.p. (pamphlet).

Appendix B. LBJ School Survey of Civic Education (K-12) Requirements and Policies, January 1999

Please fax the completed survey, or return it in the enclosed, postage paid envelope, to:
Dr. Kenneth Tolo, Professor and Project Director
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Drawer Y
Austin, TX 78713-8925
Phone: 512-471-3270 FAX: 512-471-1835
If possible, please return by January 19th, 1999.

STATE CIVIC EDUCATION (K-12) REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

Project Member:

State:

Survey Respondent:

Title:

Address:

City: **State:** **ZIP:**

Phone: **Fax:**

Date Completed:

Content Standards

1.) Where can civics standards (K-12) be found?

- *If standards exist for individual grades, circle each applicable grade. If standards exist for blocks of grades, place one circle around the applicable grades.*
- *Check only one of the five options below for each grade or block of grades. The choice for each grade should be the option that comes first, or highest, on this listing (e.g., if both "in Social Studies as an explicit subsection" and "integrated in Social Studies" applies for one particular grade level, only check "in Social Studies as an explicit subsection" for that grade).*

____ as separate standards K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

____ in Social Studies as an explicit subsection K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

____ integrated in Social Studies K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

____ other ____________________ K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

____ do not currently exist K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
(if true for all grades, go to question #6)

Project Notes: ____________________

Source(s): ____________________

Respondent Comments: ____________________

2.) What is the document containing civics standards called?

Source(s): ____________________

Respondent Comments: ____________________

3.) In what courses do civic education standards apply? *Check all that apply and circle applicable grade levels.*

____	Civics	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Government	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	U.S. History	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	State History	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	World History	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Sociology	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Psychology	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Economics	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Geography	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Anthropology	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
____	Other: ____________	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

4.) In what year were the current standards implemented?

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

5.) a) Are the standards mandated or optional for all districts?

____ mandated for all districts

____ optional for all districts

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

b) If "optional" on (a), how many, and what percentage of districts, have adopted the state standards?

__________ # districts __________%

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

6.) If no standards exist, is the state currently planning to implement new standards in the future?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Unknown or not applicable

If "yes" and if known, when will the new standards be implemented? __________

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

7.) Does the state require that students take a course entitled "Civics"?

_____ Yes _____ No

If "yes", at what grade level(s)? __________________________

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments: ____

____

8.) Does the state require that students take a government course?

_____ Yes _____ No

If "yes", at what grade level(s)? ____________________

Project Notes: ____

____

____

Source(s): ____

____

Respondent Comments: ____

____

9.) Does the state require schools to offer any of the following electives? *Check any that apply.*

_____ Civics

_____ Government

_____ Civics/Government

_____ Other civic education course title: ____________________

_____ None

_____ Don't know

Project Notes: ____

____

____

Source(s): ____

____

Respondent Comments: ____

____

Other Policies

10.) What other state policies related to civic education exist? *Check all that apply.*

____ required community service *Describe:* ____________

____ state sponsored mock government competition *Describe:* ____________

____ specifically earmarked funding for civic education *Describe:* ____________

____ gubernatorial initiative on civic education *Describe:* ____________

____ other: ____________ *Describe:* ____________

Project Notes: ____________

Source(s): ____________

Respondent Comments: ____________

11.) Has the state education agency produced any publications other than standards that pertain to civic education? ***List:***

____

Source(s): ____________

Respondent Comments: ____________

Constitutional & Statutory Mandates

12.) Does the state constitution address the importance of fostering good citizenship through education?

____ Yes

____ No

If "yes", reference and state the relevant language:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

13.) Are there any state statutes regarding civic education (K-12) in your state?

____ Yes

____ No

If "yes", reference and state the relevant language:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

Teacher Certification & Training

14.) In order to teach courses pertaining to civics, what certification is required by the state? *Check all that apply and circle the grades for which certification is required.*

____	civics	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	other ____
____	government	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	other ____
____	social studies	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	other ____
____	other: ____________	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	other ____
____	general teaching certification only	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	other ____
____	none	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	other ____

Project Notes: ____________________

Source(s): ____________________

Respondent Comments: ____________________

15.) To be certified to teach courses pertaining to civics, which of the following are required? *Check all that apply.*

____ test in subject *Describe:* ____________________

____ specific subject courses *Describe:* ____________________

____ academic major *Describe:* ____________________

____ other: ____________ *Describe:* ____________________

____ none

Project Notes: ____________________

Source(s): ____________________

Respondent Comments: ____________________

16.) What opportunities exist for civics, government, or social studies teachers to continue their training through professional development? *Check all that apply.*

_____ state in-services

_____ state conferences

_____ university courses

_____ required professional development

_____ training through community organizations

_____ other: ____

Project Notes: ____

____

____

Source(s): ____

____

Respondent Comments: ____

____

Student Assessment

17.) How does the state assess civic education of students through testing?

_____ with a separate, stand-alone test

_____ topics covered within (check appropriate topics)

  _____ Social Studies test

  _____ Government test

  _____ History test

  _____ Other: ________________ test

_____ civics topics currently not tested, but state plans to begin testing in the year ______ *(if known, indicate method above)*

_____ civics topics not tested, and state has no plans to do so *(go to question #21)*

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

18.) At which grade levels are these tests administered? *Circle all that apply.*

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

19.) Does failure to meet test goals result in lack of student promotion or graduation? *Check any that apply.*

_____ no promotion

_____ no graduation

_____ other ______________________________

_____ failure to meet test goals does not prevent promotion or graduation

Project Notes:

Source(s):

Respondent Comments:

20.) How does the state hold schools/districts accountable for student performance on tests? *Check all that apply.*

____ public reporting of scores *Describe:* ____________________

____ rewards *Describe:* ____________________

____ sanctions *Describe:* ____________________

____ other: ____________ *Describe:* ____________________

Project Notes: ____________________

Source(s): ____________________

Respondent Comments: ____________________

21.) Does the state use any other assessments to gauge civic education? *Check all that apply.*

____ essay *Describe:* ____________________

____ role play *Describe:* ____________________

____ oral presentation *Describe:* ____________________

____ portfolio *Describe:* ____________________

____ other: ____________ *Describe:* ____________________

Project Notes: ____________________

Source(s): ____________________

Respondent Comments: ____________________

Additional Comments

22.) Describe any state policies or requirements not adequately covered above.

Respondent Comments:

Additional Sources:

THANK YOU!

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please call Kenneth Tolo at (512) 471-3270

Appendix C. Location of Civics in State Social Studies Standards

Alabama

Alabama State Department of Education, *Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies* (Montgomery, Alabama, 1998).

Project researchers evaluated the entire American Government course.

Alaska

Alaska Department of Education, *Alaska Standards: Content Standards for Alaska Students* (Juneau, Alaska, 1996).

Project researchers looked at the entire Government and Citizenship subject, as well as an explicit civics standard in Section D of History ("A student should be able to integrate historical knowledge with historical skill to effectively participate as a citizen and as a lifelong learner").

Arizona

No social studies standards at this time.

Arkansas

Arkansas Department of Education, *Arkansas Social Studies Curriculum Framework* (Little Rock, Arkansas, 1994).

Project researchers examined only the citizenship strand.

California

California State Board of Education, *History/Social Science Content Standards, Grades K-12* (Sacramento, California, 1998).

Project researchers examined the entire Principles of American Democracy course. In the World Studies class, researchers examined three of the broad knowledge statements:

10.1 Students relate the moral and ethical principles in Ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, in Judaism and in Christianity to the development of Western political thought.

10.2 Students compare and contrast the Glorious Revolution of England, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution and their enduring effects on the worldwide political expectations for self-government and individual liberty.

10.7 Students analyze the rise of totalitarian governments after World War I.

In the U.S. Studies class, project researchers looked at two statements:

11.1 Students analyze the significant events surrounding the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.

11.6 Students analyze the different explanations for the Great Depression and how the New Deal fundamentally changed the role of the federal government.

In Economics, researchers counted one statement:

12.3 Students analyze the influence of the U.S. government on the American economy.

Colorado

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Civics* (Denver, Colorado, 1998).

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Geography* (Denver, Colorado, 1995).

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Economics* (Denver, Colorado, 1998).

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for History* (Denver, Colorado, 1995).

Project researchers evaluated the entire *Model Content Standards for Civics* document. Within *Model Content Standards for History*, researchers counted all of Standard Five ("Students understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time").

Connecticut

Connecticut State Department of Education, *The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curriculum Goals and Standards* (Hartford, Connecticut, 1998).

Project researchers counted the entire Civics and Government subject.

Delaware

Delaware Department of Public Instruction, *Social Studies Curriculum Framework: Content Standards* (Dover, Delaware, 1995).

Project researchers used the entire Civics subject.

Florida

Florida Department of Education, *Sunshine State Standards: PreK-12 Social Studies* (Tallahassee, Florida, 1996).

Project researchers counted the Civics and Government subject.

Georgia

Georgia Department of Education, *Georgia's Quality Core Curriculum: Raising Expectations* (Atlanta, Georgia, 1998).

Project researchers counted all the standards in the Civics/Citizenship and American Government courses.

Hawaii

Hawaii Department of Education, *Hawaii Content and Performance Standards* (Honolulu, Hawaii, 1996).

Project researchers evaluated the entire Political Science/Citizenship subject.

Idaho

Idaho State Board of Education, *Idaho's Standards for Excellence: State Exiting Standards (Version 1.0)* (Boise, Idaho, 1999).

Project researchers counted the entire subject of Civics-Government, as well as Evolution of Democracy within the subject of U.S. History. No civics was labeled in Economics.

Illinois

Illinois State Board of Education, *Illinois Learning Standards* (Springfield, Illinois, 1997).

Project researchers counted civics within all of State Goal 14 ("Understand political systems, with an emphasis on the United States") and also found civics within Learning Standard E in State Goal 15 ("Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States") and Learning Standard B in State Goal 16 ("Understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations").

Indiana

Indiana Department of Education, *The Social Studies Proficiency Guide: An Aid to Curriculum Development* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1996).

Project researchers evaluated the entire U.S. Government subject, counted The Role of Government strand within Economics and the Citizenship and Government and Civic Ideals and Practice strands within United States History, and looked at the Geographic Thinking and Citizenship strand in World Geography and the Political Ideas and Government strand in World History/Civilization.

Iowa

No standards.

Kansas

Kansas State Board of Education, *The Kansas Curricular Standards for Civics-Government, Economics, Geography, and History (Second Draft)* (Topeka, Kansas, 1998).

Project researchers counted the entire Civics-Government course and Economics Benchmark 4 ("The learner will analyze the role of the government in the economy").

Kentucky

Kentucky Department of Education, *Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools: Grades Primary-12* (Frankfort, Kentucky, n.d.).

Project researchers examined the entire Government course, as well as every government and civics strand in U.S. History, namely, Reconstruction to the Present, World Civilization: 1500-Present, Economics, and World Geography.

Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Education, *Louisiana Social Studies Content Standards: State Standards for Curriculum Development* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1997).

Project researchers counted only the Civics subject.

Maine

Maine Department of Education, *State of Maine Learning Results* (Augusta, Maine, 1997).

Project researchers considered only the Civics and Government subject.

Maryland

Maryland State Department of Education, *Maryland Social Studies Standards—Draft* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1998).

Project researchers evaluated the entire Government subject; counted two sections of U.S. History ("Students understand how the Cold War and related conflicts influenced domestic politics and foreign policy from 1945 to the present" and "Students understand domestic policies and politics from 1945 to the present, including the struggle for racial and gender equity and the extension of liberties"); and looked at one section of Economics ("Students demonstrate understanding of the economic roles of government in a market-oriented economy").

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Department of Education, *History and Social Science Curriculum Framework* (Malden, Massachusetts, 1997).

Project researchers counted the entire Civics and Government strand.

Michigan

Michigan State Board of Education, *Social Studies: Vision Statement and Content Standards and Benchmarks* (Lansing, Michigan, 1996).

Project researchers counted Civic Perspectives and Citizen Involvement in their entirety; and also counted Content Standard 3 in Economic Perspectives ("All students will describe how government decisions on taxation, spending, public goods, and regulations impact what is produced, how it is produced, and who receives the benefits of production").

Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, *Graduation Standards* (St. Paul, Minnesota, 1998).

Project researchers counted as civics only the content standard United States Citizenship in the People and Cultures learning area.

Mississippi

Mississippi Department of Education, *Mississippi Social Studies Framework* (Jackson, Mississippi, 1998).

Because Mississippi's definition of civics did not match the project's definition of civics, project researchers did not count all the strands labeled as "civics"; rather, researchers counted all of U.S. Government and all of Law-Related Education. (Notably, Mississippi is the only state whose standards includes a Law-Related Education course.)

Project researchers also counted Competency 5 in U.S. History ("Analyze the contributions of Americans to the ongoing democratic process to include civic responsibilities") and Competency 5 in World History ("Explain how civic responsibilities are important to Americans as citizens of a global community").

Missouri

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *The Show-Me Standards* (Jefferson City, Missouri, 1996).

Because none of Missouri's standards are labeled as "civics," project researchers did not evaluate the intellectual skills in the document.

Montana

No social studies standards at this time.

Nebraska

Nebraska State Board of Education, *Nebraska K-12 Social Studies Standards* (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1998).

Project researchers counted the entire course of United States and Nebraska Government and the Economy. Within the World History, World Geography and United States History courses, researchers counted every knowledge statement identified as relating to one of the themes of Power, Authority and Governance, or Civic Ideals and Practice.

Nevada

No social studies standards at this time.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Department of Education, *K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Framework* (Concord, New Hampshire, 1995).

The only section counted was the Civics and Government subject.

New Jersey

New Jersey State Department of Education, *Core Curriculum Content Standards* (Trenton, New Jersey, 1996).

Project researchers counted three of the nine social studies standards:

> 6.1 All students will learn democratic citizenship and how to participate in the constitutional system of government of the United States.

> 6.2 All students will learn democratic citizenship through participation in the humanities, including all forms of aesthetic expression.
>
> 6.3 All students will acquire historical understanding of political and diplomatic ideas, forces, and institutions throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.

New Mexico

New Mexico State Department of Education, *Content Standards with Benchmarks for Kindergarten Through 12th Grade: Social Studies* (Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1997).

Project researchers counted 4 of the 14 standards:

> Number 2: Students will use democratic understanding and civic values to work together with others, make informed judgments and decisions, and act in accordance with democratic processes and principles to protect individual rights, serve their interests and promote the common good in order to become effective United States citizens (and understand the role that governments have in demonstrating this understanding).
>
> Number 7: Students will know and understand the historical developments, the forms and purposes of governments in the world, with an emphasis on principles, ideals, and forms of governments of the United States.
>
> Number 8: Students will know and understand the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of United States citizens.
>
> Number 9: Students will understand, develop, and employ the civics skills necessary for participatory citizenship.

New York

New York State Education Department, *Learning Standards for Social Studies* (Albany, New York, 1996).

Project researchers counted only Standard 5 (Civics, Citizenship and Government).

North Carolina

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *North Carolina Standard Course of Study and Grade Level Competencies: Social Studies, K-12* (Raleigh, North Carolina, 1997).

Project researchers counted the entire Government course and the entire Law and Justice course; the legal and political systems sections of the Economic, Legal, and Political Systems course; Goal 2 (America's Founding Documents) and Goal 11 (Post-World War II Politics) in the U.S. History course; and, in Economics, Goal 4 (Role of Government).

North Dakota

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, *North Dakota Social Studies Standards (Draft)* (Bismarck, North Dakota, 1998).

Project researchers counted all of Standard 2 ("Students understand how political institutions develop and function") and Standard 5 ("Students understand the role of the citizen in society").

Ohio

Ohio Department of Education, *Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program* (Columbus, Ohio, 1994).

Project researchers evaluated, in every high school grade level, two civics-related themes: Democratic Processes and Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma State Department of Education, *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS): A Core Curriculum for Our Children's Future* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1997).

Project researchers considered only the standards within the Government course.

Oregon

Oregon Department of Education, *Oregon Standards* (Salem, Oregon, 1998).

Project researchers counted the entire Civics and Government subject.

Pennsylvania

No social studies standards at this time.

Rhode Island

No social studies standards at this time.

South Carolina

South Carolina State Board of Education, *South Carolina Social Studies Framework and Standards (Working Draft)* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1999).

Project researchers counted the entire Government/Political Science strand for grades 11-12. (There is no such strand for grades 9-10.)

South Dakota

South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, *South Dakota Social Studies Content Standards (Draft III)* (Pierre, South Dakota, 1999).

Project researchers counted all the Civics and Government courses as well as U.S. History Standard 4 ("The students will analyze the events and ideas of the Constitutional era with emphasis on ... the Articles of Confederation ... and the addition of the Bill of Rights to the Constitution").

Tennessee

Tennessee Board of Education, *K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Frameworks* (Nashville, Tennessee, 1996).

Project researchers counted only the U.S. Government course as civics.

Texas

Texas Education Agency, *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies* (Austin, Texas, 1997).

Texas Education Agency, *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and Its Benefits* (Austin, Texas, 1997).

Project researchers counted the entire Government course, as well as the government and citizenship strands in U.S. History, World History, World Geography, and Economics.

Utah

Utah State Board of Education, *Social Studies Core Curriculum: Grades 7-12* (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1996).

Project researchers counted the entire American Government and Law course (except the Process Skills section); Standard 4 in World Civilizations, U.S. History/Government, and Economics (but not Standard 4 in Geography for Life, because the standard has been adapted just enough to no longer explicitly relate to civics); and Standard 7 in these courses.

Vermont

Vermont Department of Education, *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities* (Montpelier, Vermont, 1996).

Project researchers counted the entire Civic/Social Responsibility Skills section, as well as the Citizenship Knowledge section. In Economics, researchers counted section 6.19 (Government and Resources).

Virginia

Virginia Board of Education, *History and Social Studies Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* (Richmond, Virginia, 1995).

Project researchers counted only the United States and Virginia Government course.

Washington

Washington State Commission on Student Learning, *Essential Academic Learning Requirement: Technical Manual* (Olympia, Washington, 1998).

Project researchers counted all standards in the Civics subject, plus one standard in Economics (" 1.4: Examine how government policies influence the economy").

West Virginia

West Virginia Department of Education, *Instructional Goals and Objectives for West Virginia Schools: Social Studies* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1998).

Project researchers counted the entire Civics course, as well as all the civics strands in the other required courses.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Social Studies* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1998).

Project researchers counted the entire Political Science and Citizenship subject.

Wyoming

No social studies standards at this time.

Appendix D. Description of State Social Studies Standards

Alabama

Alabama State Department of Education, *Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies* (Montgomery, Alabama, 1998).

Civic virtue is laced throughout the introduction of the Alabama social studies standards: "The overall social studies goal of civic responsibilities requires the development of competent citizens committed to the fundamental constitutional values and principles."[1] In order to achieve this standard, the social studies curriculum is divided; "Alabama's K-12 Social Studies curriculum encompasses four program goals that lead toward civic responsibility: historic literacy, geographic literacy, economic literacy, and political literacy."[2] In fact, Alabama is very specific about the minimum amount of time that should focus on character development. "For all grades, not less than ten minutes instruction per day shall focus upon the students' development of the following character traits: courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect of the environment, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, and perseverance."[3]

Alabama's curriculum course of study is course based and grade specific. The courses provided are World History and Geography, U.S. History and Geography, American Government, and Principles of Economics. Within each content standard, the individually numbered content standards are grouped into time periods or content topics. Following each numbered content standard is bulleted supporting content material. Specific examples are occasionally provided to illustrate the content standards, but these examples are not meant to be exhaustive; in fact, Alabama describes the content standards as the "minimum content required."[4] No unifying strands are woven through the entire document; instead, the time period and content standards are specific only to each course.

Civics is easy to find within the standards.

Alaska

Alaska Department of Education, *Alaska Standards: Content Standards for Alaska Students* (Juneau, Alaska, 1996).

Within the introduction to the standards, Alaska fails to mention civics as a goal of public education.

Alaska standards are subject based; the standards, although grouped by subject, are not delineated by grade level. In fact, every standard appears to address all grade levels. Although history is its own section, for example, it is not divided into specific courses or grades (i.e., no America or world history, no tenth-grade curriculum). Social studies is categorized into three subjects: History, Geography, and Government and Citizenship. Alaska does not use the benchmark/framework terminology. There are no unifying strands running throughout the document, just headings specific to each subject. Under each heading are individual standards that support the heading but no lesson plans or bulleted examples. Alaska standards are short and general.

In the subject entitled "Government and Citizenship," civics is easy to find, but it is not clearly labeled in any other subject.

Arizona

No social studies standards at this time.

Arkansas

Arkansas Department of Education, *Arkansas Social Studies Curriculum Framework* (Little Rock, Arkansas, 1994).

Within the introduction to the standards, Arkansas notes that "[t]he social studies framework establishes curricular goals and expectations to insure that students are able to … engage in full and active civic participation based on knowledge of and appreciation for the roles and responsibilities of citizens in a culturally diverse democratic republic."[5]

Arkansas' standards are organized thematically; the social studies curriculum framework is divided into six strands:

Strand One: Interdependence
Strand Two: Continuity and Change
Strand Three: Cultural Perspectives
Strand Four: Scarcity and Choice
Strand Five: Cooperation and Conflict
Strand Six: Citizenship

Under each strand, a single content standard is listed. For "Strand Six: Citizenship," for example, the content standard states: "Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ideals, rights and responsibilities of participating in a democratic society."[6]

Following the content standards are student learning expectations grouped by grade-level divisions (i.e., K-4, 5-8, 9-12). The learning expectations are statements of knowledge and skills that support the content standards; beyond the grades 9-12 grouping, no specific grade-level material is prescribed. Arkansas standards are short and general.

Civics is easy to find because of the specific Citizenship strand.

California

California State Board of Education, *History/Social Science Content Standards, Grades K-12* (Sacramento, California, 1998).

The introduction to California's standards states that "[t]hese standards emphasize historical narrative, the role of significant individuals throughout history, and convey the rights and obligations of citizenship."[7]

California's social studies standards are course based, with specific courses assigned to specific grade levels. Courses offered include World History, Culture and Geography; United States History and Geography; Principles of American Democracy; and Principles of Economics. Each course begins with an introductory paragraph summarizing the course content. Within each course, several broad statements of knowledge are given; each is supported by a list of elaborating points.

California also gives two lists of Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills—one for grades 6-8 and the other for grades 9-12. These skills "are to be learned through, and applied to, the content standards."[8] They are not to be addressed in isolation. The skills are grouped according to three categories: Chronological and Spatial Thinking; Historical Research, Evidence, and Point of View; and Historical Interpretation.

Civics is not easy to find, since no civics course or civics strand exists in the California standards.

Colorado

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Civics* (Denver, Colorado, 1998).

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Geography* (Denver, Colorado, 1995).

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for Economics* (Denver, Colorado, 1998).

Colorado State Board of Education, *Model Content Standards for History* (Denver, Colorado, 1995).

Colorado emphasizes the importance of civic virtue through a set of distinct civics standards. The introduction notes that "[p]ublic education in the United States of America has a civic purpose: to prepare informed, and participative citizens committed to the preservation of the constitutional republic of the United States."[9] In fact, Colorado links the importance of civic education for the continuation of our democracy. "It is through systematic instruction in civics and government that young people develop and apply the intellectual and participatory skills that result in understanding what government of the people, by the people, and for the people really means."[10]

Social studies is divided into four subjects: Civics, Economics, Geography, and History. Within each subject, three to six overarching standards are given. Each standard is supported by a rationale explaining the importance of the standard as well as several subpoints. Within each subpoint, specific content is grouped by grade levels (i.e., K-4, 5-8, 9-12). Each of the four subjects ends with an extensive glossary.

Not only does Colorado separate civics as a specific subject, but within this subject it also pays notable attention to the notion of civic participation.

Connecticut

Connecticut State Department of Education, *The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curriculum Goals and Standards* (Hartford, Connecticut, 1998).

Connecticut sent project researchers its entire standards document—all subjects, all grade levels. In the general introduction to the entire standards document, the importance of civics is briefly mentioned: "Together, these new curriculum resources ... represent the state's response to the first goal in Connecticut's Comprehensive Plan for Education/1996-2000: 'To set and meet high expectations for academic achievement for all students, in order to prepare them for productive adult life, continuing education, and responsible citizenship.'"[11]

Within the "Social Studies Curriculum Framework" chapter, social studies is divided into four subjects: History, Civics and Government, Geography, and Economics. Within each subject, three to four content standards are give. Within each content standard, specific content points are grouped by grade level (i.e., K-4, 5-8, 9-12).

Because it is a separate subject, civics is easy to find. In History, Economics, and Geography, however, no standards are specifically labeled as civics.

Delaware

Delaware Department of Public Instruction, *Social Studies Curriculum Framework: Content Standards* (Dover, Delaware, 1995).

In the chapter titled "Introduction: The Challenge of Citizenship," Delaware pays particular attention to the importance of civic education. "The unifying objective of this course of studies is preparing young people to become informed and active citizens, who accept their responsibilities, understand their rights, and participate actively in society and government."[12] In addition, the document notes that "[s]tudying civics prepares students to translate beliefs into actions and ideas into policies, to discharge their responsibilities while protecting their rights and the rights of others."[13]

Delaware divides social studies into four subjects: Civics, Economics, Geography, and History. Each subject has three to four standards. Within each content standard, no more than two subpoints are grouped for each grade cluster (i.e., K-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12). At the end of the document, each standard is elaborated with sample activities, including a Parent Partnership Project.

Although the section is short and general, civics is easy to find within the document. Civics content is not clearly labeled within the other subjects, however.

Florida

Florida Department of Education, *Sunshine State Standards: PreK-12 Social Studies* (Tallahassee, Florida, 1996).

No language referring to civics is used in the introduction.

Florida standards are divided into four subjects:

Time, Continuity, and Change (History)
People, Places, and Environments (Geography)
Government and the Citizen (Civics and Government)
Economics

Each of these subjects is considered a strand within social studies. Each is supported by just a few standards, elaborated by benchmarks that are grouped by grade levels (i.e., K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12).

Civics is easy to find in the section labeled as such. Civics is not highlighted anywhere else within the document.

Georgia

Georgia Department of Education, *Georgia's Quality Core Curriculum: Raising Expectations* (Atlanta, Georgia, 1998).

In the introduction to the Georgia standards is a sentence advising that "[t]he primary purpose of Social Studies education in Georgia schools is to help students become productive and responsible citizens."[14] In addition, the state notes that "[s]tudents will develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and values of a committed, competent, citizen who participates in the civic affairs of the community and nation."[15]

Georgia standards are course based but grouped only as specifically as grade levels 9-12. Under each course, many content standards are given. The Civics/Citizenship course lists 19. Each content standard is categorized by both a topic and a concept. For example, the first standard for Civics/Citizenship says: "Define government and list the characteristics of a state (country)." The topic for this standard is "Structure of the U.S. Government" and the concept is "Government." Many of the content standards are followed by bulleted points that give specificity to the standard. Most of the content standards are accompanied by suggested skills and activities, such as debate, flowcharts, timelines, and mock elections.

Civics is easy to find in the course entitled "Civics/Citizenship," but within the other courses the lack of any unifying strands makes it difficult to find civics topics.

Hawaii

Hawaii Department of Education, *Hawaii Content and Performance Standards* (Honolulu, Hawaii, 1996).

Hawaii did not provide project researchers with its entire standards document. In particular, researchers did not get the introduction.

Hawaii's standards are subject based and divided into grade-level groupings of K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12. The subjects found in all the grade levels are Cultural Anthropology, History, Geography, Economics, Political Science/Citizenship, and Global Issues. (The last subject is not found in the K-3 section.) For each subject, several content standards are given. These are broad topic areas, such as "Political systems" or "The common good." Each content standard is supported by at least one performance standard. These are the statements of knowledge that form the basis for all state standards.

Civics is easy to find in the Political Science/Citizenship subject. The content standards make it simple to identify broad topics within each subject, but researchers did not find any explicit civics material within the other subjects.

Idaho

Idaho State Board of Education, *Idaho's Standards for Excellence: State Exiting Standards (Version 1.0)* (Boise, Idaho, 1999).

In the introduction to the standards, the state notes that "[t]he goal of education in government and civics is informed, responsible participation in political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles upon which American society is based. Ultimately, a free society must rely on the knowledge, skills, and virtues of its citizens and those elected to public office. Civic education, therefore, is essential to the preservation and improvement of American representative government."[16]

Idaho has a separate section called "Evolution of Democracy" with its own standards. The introduction to the social studies standards notes that they are intended to apply to all social studies courses.

Idaho's standards are subject based: Economics, Government/Civics, and United States History. Each subject begins with a paragraph emphasizing its importance. Each subject is supported by five concepts that are further delineated by a content standard. Each content standard is supported by content knowledge and skills, which, in turn, have one or more samples of applications. Since Idaho's standards are State Exiting Standards, no grade levels are mentioned anywhere within the document. It is interesting to note that

Idaho's five concepts for Government/Civics exactly match the five organizing categories in CCE's national standards for civics and government.

Civics is easy to find in the Government/Civics section. Beyond that, however, no other subject has civics content standards. While there is the separate "Evolution in Democracy" section that is intended to apply across all social studies subjects, it is not clear how this would be integrated into the classroom material, especially in Economics.

Illinois

Illinois State Board of Education, *Illinois Learning Standards* (Springfield, Illinois, 1997).

No commentary about the importance of civics is provided in the introduction.

Within the Social Sciences section, Illinois' standards outline five state goals that roughly correspond to the subjects of government, economics, history, geography, and a study of social systems. Following each state goal is a paragraph elaborating the importance of the goal. Each state goal is then supported by several learning standards. Each learning standard is further elaborated by learning benchmarks, which are grouped by vague grade-level clusters (i.e., early elementary, late elementary, middle/junior high school, early high school, and late high school). Despite the extensive categorization, none of the goals is followed by many benchmarks; the late high school grade-level cluster, for example, ultimately contains only six learning benchmarks to support the state goal for political systems. Illinois does provide some examples, which are designated within the learning benchmarks and are specifically noted to be simply suggestions.

It is not easy to find civics within these standards. The closest reference is in "State Goal 14: Understand political systems, with an emphasis on the United States,"[17] but even here, the teacher would have to interpret this to mean civics. (The standards document contains all subjects, not just social studies, and the goals are numbered continuously throughout the document. As such, though there are only five goals in Social Sciences; they are numbered in the teens.)

Indiana

Indiana Department of Education, *The Social Studies Proficiency Guide: An Aid to Curriculum Development* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1996).

The Indiana standards are "based on the premise that social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and the humanities with the goal of helping young people to become competent, responsible citizens."[18]

Indiana develops the idea of civic decision making into an elaborated chart highlighting the key components of civic participation and values. The components are as follows:

Actively seek and acquire information

Interpret and apply information
Understand the importance of values and beliefs
Participate responsibly as citizens in a democracy[19]

Each of these components is thoroughly elaborated, making Indiana notable for its emphasis on civic virtue.

Indiana defines nine content strands that run throughout each grade of K-8 social studies. Two of these strands are specifically related to civics: (1) Citizenship and Government and (2) Civic Ideals and Practices.[20] By high school, courses are organized by the major ideas of that subject, rather than by the nine strands identified in the lower grades.

Indiana's high school standards are course based for grades 9-12. Each course is supported by strands specific to that subject. Each strand begins with a proficiency statement, which is elaborated by several indicators. In addition, each indicator has one or more sample student activity/projects that students might complete.

Civics is easy to find in the subjects that include civics strands (e.g., the Citizenship and Civic Participation strand in U.S. Government); however, not every subject contains a civics strand.

Iowa

No standards.

Kansas

Kansas State Board of Education, *The Kansas Curricular Standards for Civics-Government, Economics, Geography, and History (Second Draft)* (Topeka, Kansas, 1998).

Kansas makes no reference to the importance of civics in its introduction, which, instead, is an explanation of the document's status as a draft.

The Kansas standards are course based and organized by grade-level groups (i.e., by the end of the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and eleventh grades). Each course has a standard that is "a general statement of what a student should know and be able to do in academic subjects."[21] Only one standard is given for each course; each standard is followed by five to seven benchmarks, which are, in turn, elaborated by multiple indicators of varying lengths.

Civics is easy to find in the course entitled "Civics-Government," but civics standards are not labeled in other courses.

Kentucky

Kentucky Department of Education, *Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools: Grades Primary-12* (Frankfort, Kentucky, n.d.).

There is no reference to civics in the introduction to the standards.

The Kentucky social studies standards are course based, but there are no grade delineations with the high school courses. Five strands run though all high school courses: Historical Perspective, Geography, Economics, Government and Civics, and Culture and Society. Each strand is supported by multiple bulleted points, which list content and processes.

Civics is easy to find across the social studies curriculum, since it is clearly labeled in every course.

Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Education, *Louisiana Social Studies Content Standards: State Standards for Curriculum Development* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1997).

Louisiana notes in its introduction that "[e]ffective social studies education reinforces the democratic principles and ideals of citizenship."[22]

The standards of Louisiana are subject based and divided into three grade groups (i.e., K-4, 5-8, 9-12). For each of the four core disciplines (Geography, Civics, Economics, and History), a focus paragraph is given to elaborate the importance of that subject. The focus is followed by one standard, which in turn, is further supported by course-specific benchmarks. Each of the benchmarks is elaborated by several supporting points of knowledge, which are grouped by grade level. Following each point of knowledge are numbers referencing foundation skills that are defined in the introduction to the social studies content standards and are applied "to all students in all disciplines."[23] The foundation skills are as follows:

Communication
Problem Solving
Resource Access and Utilization
Linking and Generating Knowledge
Citizenship

Louisiana has gone to great lengths to highlight civics throughout its standards document, both by its use of the subject of civics and by its use of a citizenship foundation skill. By quickly scanning for the numerical reference, it is easy to pick out the points of knowledge that refer to the citizenship foundation skill, assuming, however, that the numerical reference is clearly defined. Unfortunately, Louisiana initially sent project researchers only a partial document that did not contain the introduction; without the introduction, the numbers are meaningless. Were a teacher to take this document off the shelf and flip it open to any social studies course, it would not be apparent what the numbers mean or where the teacher should look to find what the numbers mean. This problem could be easily solved by the inclusion of an explanation of the numerical references at the beginning of each course.

Maine

Maine Department of Education, *State of Maine Learning Results* (Augusta, Maine, 1997).

The introduction to all the Maine standards begins with six Guiding Principles, which are described as "the characteristics of a well-educated person"[24] and of which one explicitly refers to civic virtue:

> IV. A RESPONSIBLE AND INVOLVED CITIZEN
>
> A. recognizes the power of personal participation to affect the community and demonstrates participation skills;
>
> B. understands the importance of accepting responsibility for personal decisions and actions;
>
> C. knows the means of achieving personal and community health and well-being; and
>
> D. recognizes and understands the diverse nature of society.[25]

Maine social studies standards are organized by subject: Civics and Government, History, Geography, and Economics. Each content area is followed by an introduction, which is followed by the standards. Each of the standards is then supported by individual performance indicators, grouped by grade levels (i.e., pre-K-2, 3-4, 5-8, and secondary grades). Occasionally, examples of activities are given for a performance indicator.

Civics is easy to find, since one of the content areas is labeled "Civics and Government," but within the other subjects no standard labels exist to highlight civics topics.

Maryland

Maryland State Department of Education, *Maryland Social Studies Standards—Draft* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1998).

In its standards introduction, the state notes that "[i]t is the responsibility of the social studies to prepare young people to identify, understand, and work to resolve problems that confront them and our nation and the international community."[26]

Maryland's standards are subject based and divided by these grade groupings: by end of grade 3, by end of grade 5, by end of grade 8, and by end of grade 12. Each subject begins with a rationale that explains the importance of the subject and provides overall learning objectives. Following each rationale are several broad statements of knowledge that apply to all grade groupings. Within each grade are multiple standards statements supporting the statement of knowledge. The entire document concludes with a detailed glossary of social studies terms.

The state also produces a document titled *High School Core Learning Goals*, which serves as the basis for the assessment tests.

There is neither a subject nor a strand called "Civics" to make it easy to find civics content within the Maryland standards.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Department of Education, *History and Social Science Curriculum Framework* (Malden, Massachusetts, 1997).

Massachusetts takes ten sections and three appendices to explain its social studies framework. The document contains a core concept, guiding principles, core knowledge, subtopics, scope and sequence, study strands, learning standards, and examples. The core concept states that "[t]he goal of a history and social science curriculum is to enable students by systematic study to acquire the knowledge, skill, and judgment … to participate intelligently, justly and responsibly in civic life, and in deliberation about local, national, and international issues."[27]

There are six guiding principles, one of which is related to civics: "An effective history and social science curriculum recognizes each person as an individual, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all people, and also emphasizes students' shared heritage as citizens, residents, and future citizens of the United States."[28]

There are also four study strands, one of which is Civics and Government. The others are History, Geography, and Economics. These strands closely resemble the standard social studies subjects. The document elaborates the importance of each study strand and outlines what students should learn.

There are 20 learning standards, 5 of which are related to civics, as follows:

Authority, Responsibility and Power
The Founding Documents
Principles and Practices of American Government
Citizenship
Forms of Government

Massachusetts also provides vignettes to describe how the framework can be applied to teaching. In particular, one vignette demonstrates how a class of students can learn about participation in civic affairs and responsibilities of citizenship while the class also is learning about economic issues in public funding.

The bulk of the document is the study strands and learning standards. They are divided by grade groupings of pre-K-4, 5-8, 9-10, and 11-12. There are a few learning standards for each grade groupings; each is supported by examples.

Civics is easy to find within the Civics and Government subject but is not detailed elsewhere.

Michigan

Michigan State Board of Education, *Social Studies: Vision Statement and Content Standards and Benchmarks* (Lansing, Michigan, 1996).

The first sentence of the introduction to Michigan's social studies standards states that "Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences to prepare young people to become responsible citizens."[29] Much of the language in this introduction emphasizes the importance of civic virtue through student empowerment; for example, "Students are encouraged to inform themselves about pubic affairs and to become active participants in civic life rather than passive bystanders."[30] The introduction continues by stating the importance of civic education as a societal responsibility: "Social studies education for responsible citizenship is a compelling priority if we expect to sustain our constitutional democracy."[31]

The standards are divided into the four subject areas of Historical, Geographic, Civic, and Economic Perspectives. In addition, Michigan has added three extra skills sections: Inquiry, Public Discourse and Decision Making, and Citizen Involvement. Each of these seven areas contains one to five content standards. The content standards are supported by benchmarks that are divided by four grade-level classifications: early elementary, later elementary, middle school, and high school. Overall, the standards are fairly brief.

Civics is easy to identify in the two subjects of Civic Perspectives and Citizen Involvement; within the other five subjects, however, civics content is not clearly labeled.

Michigan is notable for its emphasis on civic participation. In the Citizen Involvement section, the content standards explicitly calls for responsible personal conduct; for example, a high school benchmark reads: "Act out of respect for the rule of law and hold others accountable to the same standard."[32] While project researchers commend Michigan's intent, researchers find this statement to be vague and difficult to teach. Indeed, what action by a student would satisfy the requirement? And how would a teacher assess this standard?

Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, *Graduation Standards* (St. Paul, Minnesota, 1998).

Based on the sections received by researchers from Minnesota, the introduction to the standards does not contain language referring to civics.

Minnesota standards are divided into ten learning areas; the topics seem to be subject, skill, and theme based:

Read, View, and Listen
Write and Speak
Arts and Literature
Math Applications
Inquiry
Scientific Applications
People and Cultures
Decision Making
Resource Management
World Languages

Of the learning areas, two (Inquiry; People and Cultures) are identified as containing social studies material.[33] Within each learning area, a series of content standards is given. Each content standard is further divided into a short list of subpoints supporting the content standard.

The People and Cultures learning area has a small content standard entitled "United States Citizenship." Other than this, civics is extremely difficult to find because of the unusual organization of Minnesota's standards. The learning areas do not correspond to traditional subjects, and the content standards within the learning areas are random and abstract. For example, within the Inquiry learning area, some of the content standards are Issue Analysis, New Product Development, and Recorders of History. It appears that Minnesota is working so hard to integrate material across subjects that it has parceled the material into too many different categories, making the entire document confusing. This view may be shared by Minnesota education policymakers, since the Minnesota House has already voted to abolish these standards, which have been in place only since May 1998.[34]

Mississippi

Mississippi Department of Education, *Mississippi Social Studies Framework* (Jackson, Mississippi, 1998).

Mississippi notes in its introduction that "[p]owerful social studies education at the upper grade levels will have a significant and meaningful impact on the development of positive democratic citizens."[35]

The standards of Mississippi are course based. Four courses are required for grades 9-12: Mississippi Studies; United States History: 1877 to the Present, World History: 1750 to the Present; and United States Government. The standards also list 17 social studies elective possibilities.

Each of these courses begins with a one-page introduction that describes the course and outlines the Mississippi philosophy of social studies. The philosophy identifies four subject-area strands that run through all social studies courses: history, economics, geography, and civics. The introductions are followed by five to six required competencies that are, in turn, followed by suggested objectives indicating how the competencies can be met. The strands contained within the competencies are clearly identified.

Mississippi makes a point to identify civics throughout each of its courses by *trying* to mark the competencies that contain a civics strand. It should be easy, therefore, for a teacher to find civics within the social studies curriculum. Researchers were surprised, however, that many of the competencies labeled as containing civics seem, instead, to have very little to do with civics. In World History, for example, Competency 4, which is labeled as containing civics, reads as follows: "Demonstrate the ability to use social studies tools."[36] By itself, that is not clearly civics. Certainly, some of the suggested objectives may address civics, but, once again, it becomes the teacher's responsibility to infer those lessons. In order to make the civics lessons clear, Mississippi should pinpoint the standards that specifically contain civics.

Missouri

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *The Show-Me Standards* (Jefferson City, Missouri, 1996).

The introduction to the standards includes the following statement: "All Missourians are eager to ensure that graduates of Missouri's public schools have the knowledge, skills and competencies essential to ... assume their civic responsibilities."[37]

The Missouri standards for all subject areas and all grades are printed on a double-sided 11x22-inch sheet of paper. Perhaps this format is used to make the standards functional—to go under a desk blotter, on a bulletin board, or on a table; however, the brevity and format made it hard to understand the standards clearly or take them seriously.

On one side of this single sheet, four goals for student performance are listed. One of the goals addresses the need for students "to act as responsible members of society."[38] Standards for six general subjects are listed on the other side; one of these subjects is social studies. Nothing within this section is broken down to identify subjects such as history or government. The bulleted points are broad and vague. Because of this structure, civics is not easy to identify within the document.

Montana

No social studies standards at this time.

Nebraska

Nebraska State Board of Education, *Nebraska K-12 Social Studies Standards* (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1998).

Nebraska advises in its introduction that "[t]he primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world."[39]

Nebraska's standards are course based for high school, but specific courses are not assigned to specific grades; instead, they are grouped by the end of first grade, end of fourth grade, end of eighth grade, and end of twelfth grade. For the high school level, the courses listed are World History, World Geography, U.S. History, and U.S. and Nebraska Government and the Economy. Within each course, several broad statements of knowledge are given; each is supported by a list of elaborating points. Each of these statements is identified by one or more of ten social studies themes; one of the themes is Civic Ideals and Practice.

Civics is easy to find because of the common theme labeled "Civic Ideals and Practice" that runs throughout every course.

Nevada

No social studies standards at this time.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Department of Education, *K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Framework* (Concord, New Hampshire, 1995).

New Hampshire notes in its introduction that "[s]ocial studies education encompasses instruction in the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship."[40]

The document contains a page entitled "K-12 Broad Goals for Social Studies Education." One of the broad goals reads as follows: "Students will understand and accept the responsibilities of citizenship and share in the rights and benefits granted to citizens as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitutions of the United States and New Hampshire."[41]

The New Hampshire Social Studies Framework is subject based to include Civics and Government, History, Economics, and Geography. A purpose is given for each subject explaining the importance of that subject matter. Each subject is supported by four to six curriculum standards, and the curriculum standards are followed by proficiency standards, which are categorized as "end of grade six" or "end of grade ten." These divisions correspond with the years in which the statewide assessment tests are given.

Civics is easy to find in the subject labeled "Civics and Government," but none of the curriculum standards in the other subjects clearly indicate a civics component.

New Jersey

New Jersey State Department of Education, *Core Curriculum Content Standards* (Trenton, New Jersey, 1996).

The social studies standards introduction states: "Citizen participation in government is essential in forming this nation's democracy, and is vital in sustaining it. Social studies education promotes loyalty and love of country, and it prepares students to participate intelligently in public affairs."[42]

New Jersey begins by outlining nine social studies standards. These standards can be categorized into three broad subject areas: civics, history, and geography. Each of the nine standards is elaborated by a descriptive statement. The descriptive statement is followed by cumulative progress indicators. These are divided into three grade-level categories (i.e., by the end of grade four, by the end of grade eight, and by the end of grade twelve). Two to six indicators are given per grade level.

Civics is not labeled within this document and therefore is not easy to find. Two of the nine original standards do promote the concept of democratic citizenship, but it is up to the teacher to infer this from the standards.

New Mexico

New Mexico State Department of Education, *Content Standards with Benchmarks for Kindergarten Through 12th Grade: Social Studies* (Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1997).

There is no language referring to civics in the introduction.

The New Mexico social studies standards document is based on 14 standards that seem to address a variety of social studies topics, including history, economics, geography, and government. They are not clearly labeled by subject, however. Each standard is supported by benchmarks, which are categorized by grade-level divisions (i.e., K-4, 5-8, 9-12).

These 14 standards are, for the most part, so broad as to make it difficult to classify, leaving teachers responsible for figuring out which standards address civics.

New York

New York State Education Department, *Learning Standards for Social Studies* (Albany, New York, 1996).

There is no language in the introduction referring to civics.

New York's social studies curriculum is divided into five standards, which are based on U.S. History; World History; Geography; Economics; and Civics, Citizenship, and Government. Each standard is followed by explanatory paragraphs that are grouped into three grade levels (i.e., elementary, intermediate, and commencement). These paragraphs are supported by a series of statements that are in turn supported by a series of example lessons. The second half of the standards document presents samples of student work to illustrate "some ideas of tasks that support attainment of the performance standards."[43]

Civics is clearly identified in Standard Five, which is called "Civics, Citizenship, and Government." Otherwise, civics is not labeled in any of the other standards.

North Carolina

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *North Carolina Standard Course of Study and Grade Level Competencies: Social Studies, K-12* (Raleigh, North Carolina, 1997).

The introduction to North Carolina's standards states that "[s]ocial studies programs have as a major purpose the promotion of civic competence—which is the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes required of students to be able to assume 'the office of citizen ...' in our democratic republic."[44] In addition, "[t]here must exist an essential educational ingredient that encompasses civic education, a body of knowledge that is addressed in social studies. Although many other institutions, forces, and experience do educate, the only place where this knowledge will be taught to everyone is in the public schools."[45]

Before presenting its standards, North Carolina identifies four skills that should be developed in all social studies classes. One of the four skills is the promotion of civic participation.

North Carolina's standards are course based. Within grades 9-12, however, no grade is identified with a particular course. Each course is supported by several goals, which, in turn, are supported by several statements relating to knowledge and skills.

Civics is not clearly labeled within any of the courses. Three courses lend themselves to civics (Government; Law and Justice; and Economic, Legal, and Political Systems in Action), but it is the responsibility of the teacher to infer civics.

North Dakota

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, *North Dakota Social Studies Standards (Draft)* (Bismarck, North Dakota, 1998).

There is no language referring to civics in the introduction to the draft document.

North Dakota outlines nine standards that serve as the basis for its social studies document; according to the introduction, these standards are organized around the following topics: history, political institutions, economic systems, social studies resources, citizenship, geography, cultures, sociology, psychology, and the sovereign tribal nations of North Dakota. Each of the standards is supported by two to five benchmarks for each of three grade-level divisions (i.e., K-4, 5-8, 9-12). In addition to the benchmarks, the standards are supported by examples of specific knowledge to be taught and examples of activities.

Civics is evident in that one of the standards refers to the role of the citizen.

Ohio

Ohio Department of Education, *Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program* (Columbus, Ohio, 1994).

Ohio notes in its introduction that "[t]he primary purpose of the prekindergarten through high school social studies program is to help people … develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world of finite resources."[46]

In the introduction, one of Ohio's three goals for social studies instruction is to "enable learners to work with others, make informed judgments and decisions, and act in accordance with democratic processes and principles."[47]

Ohio's standards are theme based. Six themes unite instruction at each of the individual grade levels: American Heritage, People in Societies, World Interactions, Decision Making and Resources, Democratic Processes, and Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities. Each theme is supported by several knowledge statements. Many of these statements are supported by specific examples or optional activities. These represent the minimal knowledge students should have. For each grade, performance objectives for essential knowledge are also given.

Civics is easy to find because of the common theme of Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities laced through the document.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma State Department of Education, *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS): A Core Curriculum for Our Children's Future* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1997).

Oklahoma's priority academic student skills are based on four fundamental statements, one of which highlights the importance of civic virtue: "Use the knowledge, beliefs, and skills such as thinking, decision making, and problem solving as a basis for action in a democratic society."[48]

The Oklahoma standards are course based, although the high school level courses are just grouped by grades 9-12 rather than by individual grade. The five courses given are Government, Economics, United States History, World Geography, and World History. Each course is supported by four to seven statements of knowledge. Most of the statements are, in turn, supported by a few subpoints. The standards are short and broad.

Civics is not clearly labeled anywhere in the document. A few of the statements in the Government course refer to citizens, but it is the teachers' responsibility to make the civics connection.

Oregon

Oregon Department of Education, *Oregon Standards* (Salem, Oregon, 1998).

The introduction to the Oregon standards advises that "[t]he study of the social sciences (history, civics, geography and economics) prepares students for responsible citizenship."[49]

Oregon's standards, printed on newsprint in tabloid format, are subject based. The four subjects listed for social sciences are History, Civics and Government, Geography, and Economics. A social science, skills-based section is also described, but no connection between it and the four courses is clearly given. One of the goals, for example, reads as follows: "Define and clarify an issue so that its dimensions are well understood."[50] As it stands, this is a goal that could apply to any subject at any grade level and is simply an obvious teaching practice. In order to make clear the intent, the standard would need to be more specific and clearly connected to a social studies topic or issue.

Each subject contains several common curriculum goals. The goals are organized by themes, but the themes themselves are not clear. The specific goals are supported by more specific content standards, which are, in turn, supported by benchmarks. The proficiency benchmarks are given by grades (i.e., 3, 5, 8, 10, 12). An additional benchmark entitled "PASS Criteria" is given. PASS refers to the Proficiency-Based Admission Standards System. According to the document, "PASS encourages students to demonstrate their academic skills before admission to Oregon public colleges."[51]

Civics is easy to find in the Civics and Government section but is not labeled in any of the other subjects.

Pennsylvania

No social studies standards at this time.

Rhode Island

No social studies standards at this time.

South Carolina

South Carolina State Board of Education, *South Carolina Social Studies Framework and Standards (Working Draft)* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1999).

South Carolina notes in its introduction that "[a]n educated citizenry is the key to a successful democratic society."[52] It also says that "Social Studies is vital in helping students to … understand why and how they participate as citizens, both individually and as groups."[53]

South Carolina's social studies standards are divided by grade levels, with four strands appearing in each grade from kindergarten through grade 8. Grades 9 and 10 are grouped together, as are grades 11 and 12; the four strands appear at these levels as well. The document is subject based, although South Carolina refers to the topics as strands. For example, Strand I is entitled "Time, Continuity, and Change: History." The strands correspond to the four major subject areas: History, Government/Political Science, Economics, and Geography. Each strand within every grade level is supported by several content standards.

Civics is not easy to find in the South Carolina standards. There are a couple of civics content standards within the Government/Political Science strand, but they are not evident without careful examination of the document. There are no civics themes to be found within the subjects.

South Dakota

South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, *South Dakota Social Studies Content Standards (Draft III)* (Pierre, South Dakota, 1999).

In its introduction to the document, South Dakota notes that "[t]he goal of civics instruction is to develop in all students the knowledge and skills for informed, responsible, participation in public life."[54]

South Dakota divides social studies into four courses for grades 9-12: U.S. History, Government, Civics, and World Geography. Each course is followed by many learning objectives and activities. The learning objects, although themselves not extensive, are well elaborated by bulleted examples of specific topics to be studied.

Civics is easy to find, since South Dakota provides standards for a specific course called Civics; within the other courses, however, civics is not explicitly labeled.

Tennessee

Tennessee Board of Education, *K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Frameworks* (Nashville, Tennessee, 1996).

The Tennessee social studies framework opens with a rationale that states in part as follows: "Social Studies is a combination of knowledge, attitudes, and skills designed to help students participate as effective citizens in society."[55] Tennessee also gives four broad goals for social studies, two of which highlight civic virtue. One reads: "The student will be a responsible, contributing, informed member of the family, local community, the nation, and the world."[56] The second broad goal reads: "The student will understand his/her rights and responsibilities as a citizen in a democratic society."[57]

Tennessee divides its standards into courses for the secondary level. (The rest of the standards are divided into grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8.) Each course begins with a rationale section that highlights the importance of the course, the primary skills that will be developed, and a reference to any national standards that were used to develop the standards.

No consistency exists in how the courses are divided. The history courses are divided by eras. The world geography course is divided by elements. The government and economics courses are divided by standards. And anthropology, sociology, and psychology courses have no divisions at all. All are supported by bulleted statements of skills.

Unlike the geography class, the government class has explicitly labeled civics sections. Within the history classes, civics is not clearly labeled, since these classes are divided only by eras.

Texas

Texas Education Agency, *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies* (Austin, Texas, 1997).

Texas Education Agency, *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and Its Benefits* (Austin, Texas, 1997).

The introduction to the Government course includes the following statement: " Students ... evaluate the importance of voluntary individual participation in a democratic society, and analyze the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution."[58]

Texas standards are organized by course. All high school courses are grouped together in one subchapter, with the exception of Economics, which is in a separate document.

Each course has an introduction that summarizes the content of the course. In four of the courses (United States History Studies Since Reconstruction, World History Studies, World Geography Studies, and Government), the introduction also encourages the use of "rich" primary and secondary source material, giving specific examples of materials that might be used.[59]

There are several strands that run through Economics and all four courses listed above. These strands are History, Geography, Economics, Government, Citizenship, Culture, and Science, Technology, and Society. In addition, a Social Studies Skills strand is found in each course. Generally, several knowledge statements are attached to each strand in each course. Each knowledge statement is supported by a few skills statements that elaborate the original concept.

Civics is very easy to identify in the Texas standards because common citizenship and government strands run throughout the document.

Utah

Utah State Board of Education, *Social Studies Core Curriculum: Grades 7-12* (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1996).

In the section "Utah State Social Studies Philosophy," the Utah standards state that "[t]he social studies ... include, but are not limited to, participatory citizenship and studies in character education, global and multicultural studies, law-related education, career education, and free enterprise education."[60]

Utah standards begin with seven requirements students must demonstrate. Of these, two highlight civic virtue. The first states that students will "recognize and apply democratic and constitutional principles, including freedom, equality, justice, and responsibility to individual and community."[61] The second statement calls for students to "participate in activities which serve others and promote the public good."[62]

Utah's standards are divided by courses to be taken in grades 9-12. Each course begins with a course description that "outlines in general terms the scope and sequence."[63] Each course has seven standards, which are repeated from course to course with minor adaptation. Following each of the broad standards are several objectives, which are repeated in each course, thus unifying the various courses within the document. Each objective is supported by suggested "ways in which the objective could be met."[64]

Civics is easy to find, since Standard 4 is labeled "political science" and contains the concept of citizen responsibility. Standard 7 is about "life skills"; it addresses civic virtue, since it contains the concept of responsible citizenship. Standards 4 and 7 are listed in every course.

Vermont

Vermont Department of Education, *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities* (Montpelier, Vermont, 1996).

Vermont uses its introduction to explain how to read the standards and does not discuss the importance of any specific topic.

Vermont's standards framework begins with a skills section. The four skills, of which civics/social responsibility is one, are supposed to be applied to all subject areas. Within the civic/social responsibility section, a service subcategory is included that "calls for students to take an active role in their communities ... [and] participate in democratic processes."[65]

The skills section is followed by a knowledge section divided into broad subject areas. The history and social sciences areas are further divided into subjects and themes, one of which is citizenship. Each of the subjects and themes is divided by subcategories, which are supported by standards. Evidence that supports the standards is grouped by grade-level clusters (i.e., pre-K-4, 5-8, 9-12).

The knowledge section is followed by learning opportunities, which are "recommended practices to support all students in attaining the standards in this framework."[66] The learning opportunities section includes a best practices component; one of which calls for "[o]pportunities to participate in democratic processes in the school and community."[67]

Civics is easy to find, since the standards contain a civics/social responsibility skills section and a citizenship knowledge section.

Virginia

Virginia Board of Education, *History and Social Studies Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* (Richmond, Virginia, 1995).

Five goals are given for the social studies standards. Two highlight the importance of civic virtue. The first says that the standards of learning are designed to "enable students to understand the basic values, principles, and operation of American constitutional democracy."[68] The second states that the standards are designed to "prepare students for informed and responsible citizenship."[69] These goals are followed by an explanation of the importance of social studies. In civics, "[students] should be aware of their rights; be willing to fulfill their responsibilities; be able to obtain, understand, and evaluate information relating to the performance of public officials; and be willing to hold these officials accountable."[70]

The Virginia standards are course based, with a specific course assigned to each grade level. The courses listed are World History: 1000 A.D. to the Present, World Geography, United States History, and United States and Virginia Government.

Each course begins with an introductory paragraph that summarizes the content of the course and is followed by a list of statements of knowledge that students should learn. These statements are often supported by bulleted points indicating the specific information that should be taught.

Civics is not easy to find in the document, since it is not labeled in any of the courses.

Washington

Washington State Commission on Student Learning, *Essential Academic Learning Requirement: Technical Manual* (Olympia, Washington, 1998).

Within the introduction to the social studies section appears the following statement: "The Essential Academic Learning Requirements in social studies give students the knowledge and skills they need to participate as responsible and effective citizens in an increasingly complex world."[71]

Washington's social studies standards are divided into four subjects: History, Geography, Civics, and Economics. Each subject is supported by up to four broad standards that are in turn elaborated by a few components. The components are supported by benchmarks divided by grade levels 4, 7, and 10; by the 10th grade, students should master the material.

Certainly civics is easy to find in the Civics subject, but it is not explicitly marked in any other subject.

West Virginia

West Virginia Department of Education, *Instructional Goals and Objectives for West Virginia Schools: Social Studies* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1998).

In the introduction to its social studies standards, West Virginia states: "Social studies at all levels integrate the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence and participation."[72] The document continues: "Students in K-12 will develop competencies essential for informed, responsible, civic behavior.... Students must learn and practice intellectual and participation skills essential for an involved citizenry."[73]

West Virginia's high school standards are course based, with assigned 9-11 grade courses and three elective courses. The required courses are United States Studies to 1900, World Studies to 1900, and Twentieth/Twenty-first Century Studies. The elective choices are Geography, Economics, and Civics/Government.

Each course begins with an introductory paragraph summarizing the course content. Six strands, one of which is civics, unify the required courses. Each of the courses is supported by statements of knowledge that students should learn. No examples are given in the document.

Civics is easy to find; not only is there a civics course, but there is also a civics strand running through each of the other required courses.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Social Studies* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1998).

Wisconsin doesn't have any specific language in its standards introduction referring to civic virtue. There is a page in the beginning of the document entitled "Applying the Academic Standards Across the Curriculum," which states that "[t]eachers in every class should expect and encourage the development of these shared applications, both to promote the learning of the subject content and to extend learning across the curriculum."[74] The applications fall into five general categories, one of which is "Connections with Community." A subpoint of this category includes the requirement "Recognizing and acting on responsibilities as a citizen."[75]

Wisconsin's social studies standards are subject based. Each subject (i.e., Geography, History, Political Science and Citizenship, Economics, and the Behavioral Sciences) contains performance standards that are classified by the following grade groupings: by the end of grade 4, by the end of grade 8, and by the end of grade 12. Each subject also contains a rationale explaining the importance of the subject and a list of additional resources available for curriculum development. The end of the social studies standards document contains sample tasks and examples of advanced, proficient, minimal, and basic writing samples. These samples are related to one of the Political Science and Citizenship performance standards.

Civics is easy to find in the Political Science and Citizenship section of the document. Civics is not highlighted anywhere in the other subjects, however.

Wyoming

No social studies standards at this time.

Notes

[1] Alabama State Department of Education, *Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies* (Montgomery, Alabama, 1998), p. 1.

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[3] Ibid., p. 150.

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[12] Delaware Department of Public Instruction, *Social Studies Curriculum Framework: Content Standards* (Dover, Delaware, 1995), p. v.

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[27] Massachusetts Department of Education, *History and Social Science Curriculum Framework* (Malden, Massachusetts, 1997), p. 7.

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., p. 24.

[33] Telephone interview by Shannon Lamm with John Pikola, Assessment Specialist, Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, Roseville, Minnesota, April 12, 1999.

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[56] Ibid.

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[58] Texas Education Agency, *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies* (Austin, Texas, 1997), p. C-30.

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[63] Ibid.

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[66] Ibid., p. 8.0.

[67] Ibid., p. 8.5.

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Washington State Commission on Student Learning, *Essential Academic Learning Requirement: Technical Manual* (Olympia, Washington, 1998), p. 83.

[72] West Virginia Department of Education, *Instructional Goals and Objectives for West Virginia Schools: Social Studies* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1998), p. i.

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[74] Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Social Studies* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1998). p. xii.

[75] Ibid.

Appendix E. LBJ School Survey of Secondary Social Studies Teachers, February 1999

Please return the completed survey to project researchers, or fax or mail the completed survey to:
Dr. Kenneth Tolo, Professor and Project Director
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Drawer Y
Austin, TX 78713-8925
FAX: 512-471-1835
If possible, please return by February 28th, 1999.

CIVIC EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

Name:
Address:
City: **State:** **Zip:**
Phone: **Fax:**
E-mail:
School District: **School:**
Grade(s): **Course(s):**
Years as teacher:

The Center for Civic Education is seeking information on civic education practices and policies in all 50 states. A research team from the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin is conducting this survey on district and school civic education practices and will present the results to the Center for Civic Education without identifying specific individuals. For the purposes of this survey, the definition of civics has three components:

- **Civic Virtue:** To foster among citizens civic dispositions and commitments to fundamental values and principles required for competent and responsible citizenship.
- **Civic Participation:** To develop among citizens the participatory skills required to monitor and influence the formulation, implementation, adjudication, and enforcement of public policy, as well as to participate in voluntary efforts to solve neighborhood and community problems.
- **Civic Knowledge and Intellectual Skills:** To provide citizens the knowledge and intellectual skills required to monitor and influence the formulation, implementation, adjudication, and enforcement of public policy, as well as to participate in voluntary efforts to solve neighborhood and community problems.

*** When we use the term "civics" or "civic education" we refer to either specific civic courses or social studies, history, citizenship, or government courses which include a civics strand. Thank you in advance for participating in this survey.**

STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM

1.) Do you teach a course entitled civics or citizenship?

_____ yes (Please describe course topics below.)
_____ no

2.) If you don't teach a civics course, in which of your courses is civics content included?

3.) Why do you teach civic education? (Check all that apply.)

_____ enjoy the subject
_____ assigned to it
_____ other (Please explain)

4.) How familiar are you with your state's standards for civic education?

extremely somewhat not at all

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

______ state does not have standards

5.) Has your district's school board adopted a policy regarding civic education curricula?

_____ yes (Please explain briefly.) ____

____

_____ no
_____ I don't know

6.) Does your school have a policy regarding civic education curricula?

_____ yes (Please briefly describe.)____
_____ no
_____ I don't know

7.) When you have a question or concern regarding state or district civic standards and curricula, to whom do you go? (Please list title and position, not name.)

____

____

8.) Do you feel that this person is responsive to your needs and concerns? Why?

_____ a great deal
_____ somewhat
_____ not very much
_____ not at all

(Please explain.) ____

____

9.) Rank the following actors (in terms of importance) for influencing the development of civics curricula in your school. (Please rank, using 1 to indicate the most important.)

_____ the state department of education
_____ the state legislature
_____ the district
_____ the school social studies coordinator
_____ the school principal
_____ the individual teacher
_____ other (please specify) ____

____

10.) At what level are decisions made about how much class time is devoted to civics at your school? (Please rank, using 1 to indicate the most important.)

_____ the state department of education
_____ the state legislature
_____ the district
_____ the school social studies coordinator
_____ the school principal
_____ the individual teacher
_____ other (please specify) ______________________________

11.) On average, how much time per week do you spend with students on civic education?

_____ none
_____ less than 1 hour
_____ 1 to 2 hours
_____ 2 to 3 hours
_____ 3 to 4 hours
_____ 4 to 5 hours
_____ more than 5 hours
_____ other (block time, for example) ______________________________

12.) Which, if any, of these factors prevent you from spending more time on civic education? (Please rank *the top three,* using 1 to indicate the most important.)

_____ none
_____ lack of a quality civics curriculum
_____ need to spend time on other subjects
_____ lack of specific civics standards
_____ lack of resources
_____ other (please list) ______________________________

13.) In your classroom, how much priority do the following primary elements of civic education receive? (Use the definition of civics on page 1 of this survey.)

	high priority			some priority			no priority
civic knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
intellectual skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
participatory skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
civic disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14.) Are students in your school required to participate in community service/volunteer activities?

_____ yes
_____ no

(Please explain.) ____

15.) Which are your main sources for civics lessons? (Please rank *the top three,* using 1 as the most used.)

_____ other teachers
_____ teacher workshops
_____ textbooks
_____ community organizations
_____ myself
_____ my certification training (including methods courses)
_____ social studies coordinator
_____ social studies chair
_____ other (Please list.)____

ASSESSMENT

16.) How important do you think civic education assessment of students would be in promoting instruction in civic education?

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

17.) How does the selected textbook for the course you teach affect how you teach civics?

18.) Have you or your school adopted any curricular-based civic education programs to supplement textbooks?

_____ "We the People… The Citizen and the Constitution" (Center for Civic Education)
_____ "We the People… Project Citizen" (Center for Civic Education)
_____ Other (Please specify.) _____

OTHER ACTIVITIES

19.) Please describe your most recent professional development experience in civic education. (Include date, sponsoring organization, topics covered, etc.)

20.) What extracurricular activities does your school offer to students to enhance their civic education? (Please specify.)

21.) Which community groups are involved in civics education on your campus? Please comment briefly on how each is involved (e.g., PTA, Rotary/Lions Club, Kids Voting, League of Women Voters).

THANK YOU!

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please call Kenneth Tolo at (512) 471-3270

Appendix F. LBJ School Survey of District Social Studies Coordinators, February 1999

Please return the completed survey to project researchers, or fax or mail the completed survey to:
Dr. Kenneth Tolo, Professor and Project Director
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Drawer Y
Austin, TX 78713-8925
FAX: 512-471-1835
If possible, please return by February 28th, 1999

CIVIC EDUCATION (K-12) QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTRICT SOCIAL STUDIES COORDINATOR

Name:
Address:
City: **State:** **ZIP:**
Phone: **Fax:**
E-mail:
School District: **Students Served:**
Position: **Years in position:**

The Center for Civic Education is seeking information on civic education practices and policies in all 50 states. A research team from the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin is conducting this survey on district and school civic education practices and will present the results to the Center for Civic Education without identifying specific individuals. For the purposes of this survey, the definition of civics has three components:

- **Civic Virtue:** To foster among citizens civic dispositions and commitments to fundamental values and principles required for competent and responsible citizenship.
- **Civic Participation:** To develop among citizens the participatory skills required to monitor and influence the formulation, implementation, adjudication, and enforcement of public policy, as well as to participate in voluntary efforts to solve neighborhood and community problems.
- **Civic Knowledge and Intellectual Skills:** To provide citizens the knowledge and intellectual skills required to monitor and influence the formulation, implementation, adjudication, and enforcement of public policy, as well as to participate in voluntary efforts to solve neighborhood and community problems.

***When we use the term "civics" or "civic education" we refer to either specific civic courses or social studies, history, citizenship, or government courses which include a civics strand. Thank you in advance for participating in this survey.**

STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM

1.) In what subject area is civic education content located in your district's curriculum? (Check all that apply. Indicate grade level(s).)

_____ civics course (Please specify grade(s).) ________________________________
_____ integrated into history, social studies, citizenship, or government course
(Please specify grade(s).) ________________________________
_____ not taught
_____ other (Please specify.) ________________________________

2.) Has your district's school board adopted a policy regarding civic education?

_____ yes (Please describe briefly.)________________________________
____
_____ no
_____ I don't know

3.) How involved are each of the following entities in influencing curricular decisions for civic education in your district?

	very involved		somewhat involved			not involved	
state dept. of education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
state legislation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
district administration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
school board	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
campus principal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
campus soc. stud. coordinator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
individual teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
other (Please specify.) ____________________	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4.) How familiar are you with your state's standards for civic education?

extremely			somewhat			not at all
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

_____ state does not have standards

5.) Choose the one option below that best describes the role of state standards in influencing the civic education curriculum in your district.

_____ state standards are adopted in entirety
_____ part of the state standards are adopted
_____ state standards are used as a framework for curriculum development
_____ state has not adopted civic education standards

6.) What national guidelines are used in the development of the civic education curriculum in your district?

_____ National Standards for Civic Education (written by the Center for Civic Education)
_____ National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Civic Education Assessment Instrument
_____ other (Please specify.) ____
_____ none

ASSESSMENT

7.) How are students in your school district assessed in civic education? (Check all that apply) At which grade levels does assessment occur?

_____ state standardized test (Please specify.) ______________________________
grade(s) __________________
_____ district standardized test (Please specify.) ____________________________
grade(s) __________________
_____ essay (Please specify.) ____
grade(s) __________________
_____ required community service/participation (Please specify.) _______________
grade(s) __________________
_____ other examination (Please specify.) ___________________________________
grade(s) __________________
_____ other method (Please specify.) _______________________________________
grade(s) __________________
_____ students are not assessed in civic education

8.) In your district, is student promotion contingent upon proficiency results in state or district-mandated civic assessments? If so, at what grade level(s)?

_____ yes (Please specify grade.) ____
_____ no

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

9.) Are there specific state or district certification requirements for teaching civic education? (Check all that apply.)

______ college civics coursework (Please explain.) ____________________________
______ civic education certification (Please explain.) __________________________
______ social studies certification (Please explain.) ___________________________
______ other (Please specify.) ____
____
____

10.) What professional development opportunities in civic education exist for teachers in your district? Are they required? (Please describe briefly.)

____
____
____

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

11.) How are textbooks or supplementary materials for civic education instructions selected in your district? (Please explain.)

____
____
____
____

12.) Has your school district adopted any of the following materials for use in civics classes?

_____ "We the People… The Citizen and the Constitution" (Center for Civic Education)
_____ "We the People… Project Citizen" (Center for Civic Education)
_____ Other (Please specify.) ____

OTHER ACTIVITIES

13.) Which community groups are involved in civic education in your school district? Please comment briefly on how is each involved (e.g., PTA, Rotary/Lions Club, Kids Voting, League of Women Voters).

____

____

____

THANK YOU!

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please call Kenneth Tolo at (512) 471-3270

Appendix G. Summaries of School Districts Examined

To conduct this project, researchers examined in depth two school districts in each of seven states: California, Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, and Texas. The selection of the states was based on discussions with CCE staff and a variety of criteria, including geographic diversity, urban/rural diversity, state influence in national education reform, types of state civics standards, and extent to which curriculum decisions are centralized at the state level or under local control. Within the selected states, criteria for selecting school districts included urban/suburban/rural diversity, demographic diversity, and permission to distribute secondary social studies teacher surveys. Teachers and district social studies coordinators in all 14 districts completed surveys; on-site visits with coordinators, teachers, students, and others were conducted by project researchers in all districts except one of the two Texas districts (Austin).

Descriptions of the 14 school districts examined by project researchers follow.

California

Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) has 91,000 students. Long Beach's population is 480,000. LBUSD is the third largest school district in California. Its student enrollment has increased from 81,000 to 91,000 in just four years. A large Cambodian immigrant population has settled in the city. In fact, Long Beach has the largest Cambodian population outside Cambodia. Partly because of immigrant settlement and this increase in students, as well as to the new statewide class-size reduction policies, Long Beach has hired 400 new teachers in the past few years. That number is expected to increase to 600 in the next two years.[1]

San Jose Unified School District (SJUSD) students are ethnically diverse, are members of families with diverse income levels, and total around 30,000.[2] San Jose's mean annual income is $65,870; however, 42 percent of the students in SJUSD qualify for reduced price or free school lunches. Lower income levels tend to characterize the north part of the city of San Jose, while higher income levels, some of the highest in the nation, tend to characterize the south part of the city. The population of San Jose is about one million, while the population of the area served by SJUSD is less than 250,000. Despite the geographical divide, the district seeks to meet student needs in terms of types of students, not by school and location, according to the manager of Curriculum and Learning Resources, SJUSD: "We tend to look at kids in terms of groups rather than looking at schools in groups."[3] Although the attendance areas of the schools are classified as "urban," the schools visited had a suburban environment, since they are not located in the inner city. Their surrounding environments include residential areas, shopping plazas, and uninhabited space.

Florida

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) provides public education for 338,000 students throughout Florida's most populous county. According to the MDCPS Division of Social Sciences, the district is the fourth largest in the nation.[4] It covers urban, suburban, and rural areas of South Florida. The huge school system is unlike any other in the state, unmatched in size or diversity; for example, more than 120 countries are represented by the students in the district.[5] Fifty-one percent of MDCPS students are Hispanic, many of them recent immigrants to the United States from Latin America. Thirty-four percent of the students are African American, and only 14 percent are white. Asian/Pacific Islander students make up one percent of the student population. Statewide, annual per capita income is $24,198, but in Dade County it is only $14,088 (as of 1990). Also, 43 percent of MDCPS students receive free or reduced-price lunches.[6]

The consolidated district *Leon County Public Schools (LCPS)* is primarily centered on Tallahassee, the state capital. (Florida has large consolidated school districts; each county constitutes a district.) The county has a population of nearly 200,000. LCPS has more than 32,000 students. The state government and the city's colleges and universities form the backbone of the county's economy. The median per capita income in 1996 was a relatively high $22,300. Only 28 percent of LCPS students receive free or reduced-price lunches. Fifty-nine percent of the students are white, 38 percent are African American, and Hispanic and Asian students each makes up 2 percent of the LCPS student population.[7]

Indiana

The *Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC)* has almost 24,800 students; the district as a whole has a mostly urban population of 165,058. Thirty-one percent of EVSC students receive free or reduced-price lunches, while the poverty rate, according to the 1990 census, is around 16 percent (very close to the national average). Median household income is slightly below the state and national averages. In the district, 84 percent of the students are white; the second largest population group is African American. Annual per pupil spending in the district is $6,800.[8]

The *School Town of Munster* has about 3,200 students; Munster itself has a population of 19,928. Three percent of students receive free or reduced-price lunches. According to 1990 Bureau of the Census data, Munster has a very low poverty rate, at 2 percent, compared to the national average of nearly 18 percent. Median household income in Munster is around $48,000, much higher than both the state figure ($29,000) and the national average ($30,000). In the district, 87 percent of the students are white, with Asian Pacific Islander as the next largest group. Annual per pupil spending in the district is $11,400.[9]

Nebraska

Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) covers an urban/suburban area and serves approximately 30,300 students. The population of Lincoln is 209,192. LPS has 2,625 teachers, and one-quarter of its students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. Eighty-seven percent of LPS students are white, and the district spends $6,000 per year per student.[10]

Raymond Central School District (RCSD) is located in a rural farming community about 35 miles from Lincoln. The district consists of two elementary schools and one secondary school. According to 1990 Bureau of the Census data, RCSD serves a population of only 3,400 people.[11] Of the almost 700 students attending RCSD schools, 13 percent are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches.[12] However, the poverty rate for the entire district, as of 1990, was under 7 percent, compared to the national average of nearly 18 percent. The population served by RCSD is almost entirely white and completely rural.[13]

New York

The *Albany City School District (ACSD)*, according to 1990 Bureau of the Census data, covers an area with a population of just over 100,000 and is completely urban. There are approximately 8,000 students enrolled in ACSD. It is interesting to note that nearly 30 percent of eligible students in Albany are enrolled in private or parochial schools. Of the remaining students who attend ACSD schools, the racial and ethnic makeup is roughly evenly mixed between African American and white students, with Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islanders constituting only negligible percentages. ACSD is a relatively poor district, with an annual per capita income of $13, 742, as compared with a statewide average of $16,501.[14]

The *Niskayuna Central School District (NCSD)* draws from a smaller, slightly less urban population than Albany; it is about 10 to 15 miles from central Albany. There were, as of 1990, about 21,000 residents in NCSD. The district's annual per capita income ($23,505) is quite a bit higher than that of either Albany or the rest of New York ($16,501). The NCSD student population in 1990 was over 90 percent white, with Asian/Pacific Islander being the next largest ethnic population at over five percent. In addition, NCSD does not face the drain of students to private and parochial schools that ACSD does.[15]

Ohio

The *Findlay City School District (FCSD)*, according to 1990 Bureau of the Census data, covers an almost completely urban population of around 38,000, with a student population of 6,400.[16] Located 40 miles south of Toledo, Findlay is mostly a conservative, white-collar town.[17] Its unemployment rate is extremely low (2.4 percent) because of the large number of industries that are located in and continue to relocate to Findlay. Two major employers are Marathon Oil Company and Cooper Tire and Rubber, which have their world headquarters in Findlay. In the past 14 years, 26 new companies, including seven from Japan and one from Canada, have added manufacturing plants in Findlay, creating more blue-collar employment.[18] Per capita income, according to the 1990 census, is roughly on a par with the rest of the country, while the poverty rate (at 9.9 percent in 1990) is significantly lower than the national average (which is nearly 18 percent).

The *Putnam County Schools* actually consists of nine local school districts: Columbus, Continental, Jennings, Kalida, Liepsic, Miller City-New Cleveland, Ottawa-Glandorf, Ottoville, and Pandora-Gilboa. These nine districts are predominantly rural and too small to support themselves individually, so they are aided and coordinated by the Putnam County Educational Service Center (there are 57 such service centers across the state). The service center does not mandate policy to the smaller local school districts; rather, its role is to aid in district coordination as well as fund collective efforts for services needed by all nine districts. All told, Putnam County has a population of less than 34,000, and is home to around 7,500 students. The largest village in the county and the seat of Putnam County government, Ottawa, is about 50 miles southwest of Toledo and 20 miles west of Findlay. Its population is around 4,000 people. While Putnam County is a rural area with rich farmland, agriculture is only a part-time occupation for most of the residents. Phillips Magnavox is a large employer in the area. The vast majority of the population is white. The exception is the Leipsic Local School District, which is 37 percent Hispanic. Historically, Leipsic had been a tomato-growing area that attracted a large immigrant population. Though the region has lost much of its agricultural base, the minority community has remained in the area.[19]

Texas

Austin Independent School District (AISD) serves about 78,600 students, and Austin has a population of about 608,000.[20] Fifty percent of AISD students qualify for reduced-price or free lunches. Forty-three percent of AISD students are Hispanic, 38 percent are white, and 18 percent are African American. Per pupil expenditures in Austin are $4,749 per year. Along with being the capital city of the second most populous state and the home of the largest university campus in the United States, Austin contains a rapidly expanding collection of high-technology firms.

McAllen Independent School District (MISD) is located in a city with approximately 100,000 residents in the extreme southern part of Texas.[21] It serves a student population of more than 21,000, with more than 1,400 teachers.[22] With its close proximity to Mexico, McAllen has a school-age population that is approximately 87 percent Hispanic. Many of these students are from first- or second-generation American families.[23] At the same time, the poverty level in McAllen is quite high. The Texas Education Agency estimates that approximately 62 percent of McAllen students are economically disadvantaged, while 36 percent participate in bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.[24] Along with its high proportion of Hispanic students, McAllen also has a relatively large number of students from regions other than the Americas. A large portion of McAllen's economic activity derives from international trade. Although much of the actual manufacturing activity goes across the border, many of the plant managers and industry executives, who are originally from countries other than the United States and Mexico, live in McAllen.[25] The McAllen area is also known for its agriculture, but Bureau of the Census data show that 100 percent of the district is urban.[26] Another interesting dynamic of McAllen is its attractiveness as a winter residence for retirees from northern states. This influx of older Americans positively affects civic education in the area, as many of these retirees are veterans of foreign wars and are particularly patriotic and interested in civic activities.[27]

Notes

[1] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Linda Mehlbrech, History/Social Studies Curriculum Leader, Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, California, February 25, 1999.

[2] Telephone interview by Tiffany Reyes with Eric Buchanan, Director, Educational Accountability, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, March 19, 1999.

[3] Interview by Megan Magrane and Tiffany Reyes with Catherine Graham, Manager, Curriculum and Learning Resources, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California, February 23, 1999.

[4] Interview by Greg Litt, Nicoletta Raggi, and Dana Williams with Michael Friedman, Division of Social Sciences, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida, February 23, 1999.

[5] Ibid.

[6] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *School District Data Book Profiles: 1989-1990.* Online. Available: http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/sddb-stateis.html. Accessed: June 17, 1999.

[7] Interview by Niccoletta Raggi and Dana Williams with Bruce Long, Social Studies Developer, Leon County Public Schools, Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, 1999.

[8] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *School District Data Book Profiles: 1989-1990.* Online. Available: http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/sddb-stateis.html. Accessed: June 17, 1999.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Nebraska State Board of Education, *School District Membership Report,* Lincoln, Nebraska, October 9, 1998 (computer printout).

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Alvin Bell, Government Department Head and Teacher, Findlay High School, Findlay School District, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[18] Interview by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with John Stozich, Mayor, Findlay, Ohio, February 24, 1999.

[19] Interviews by Beth Franklin and Michelle Patterson with Pat Smith, Middle School Curriculum Coordinator; and Scott Hummel, Secondary School Curriculum Coordinator, Putnam County Educational Service Center, Ottawa, Ohio, February 25, 1999.

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